

OVER
25 PAGES
OF REVIEWS

AMIGA ACTION

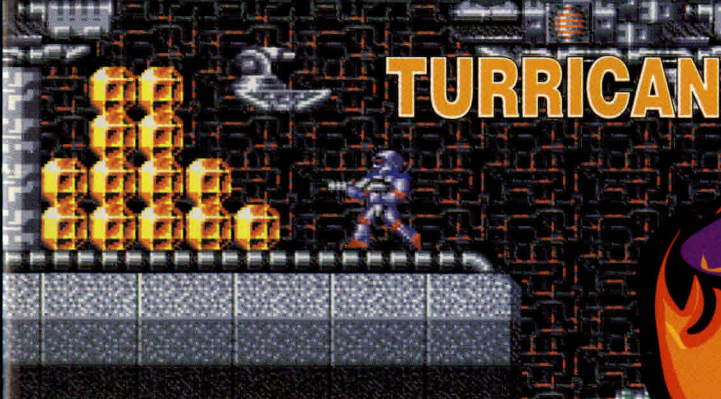
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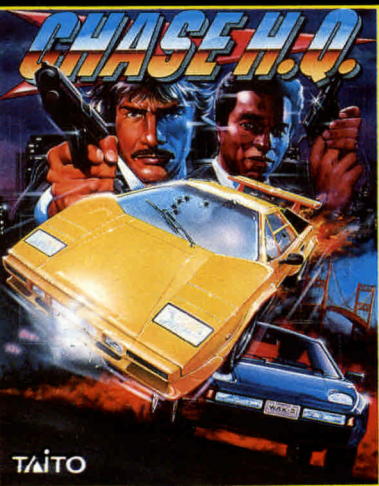
INTO THE

M C A

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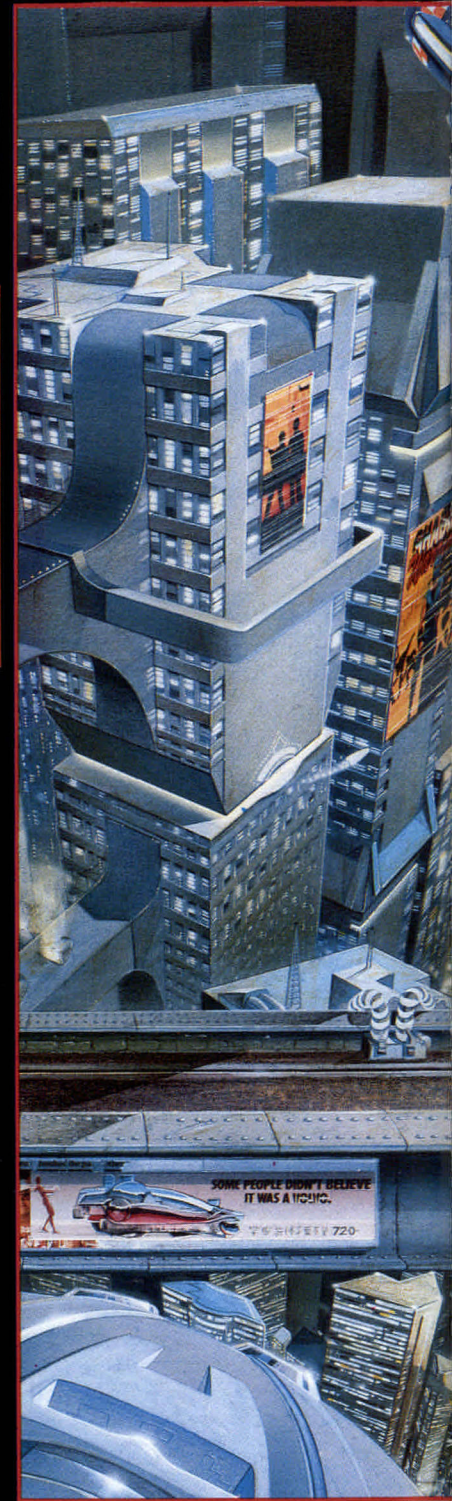
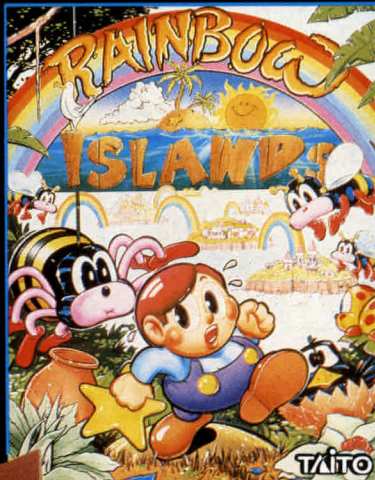
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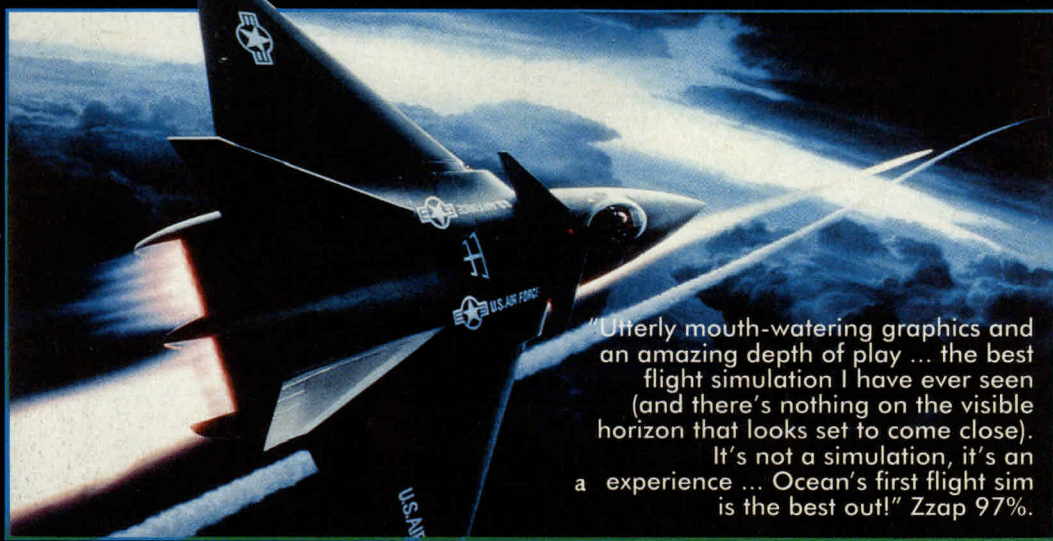


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*F-29 RETALIATOR ONLY AVAILABLE ON ATARI ST & AMIGA.



X C

FUTURE...



"Utterly mouth-watering graphics and an amazing depth of play ... the best flight simulation I have ever seen (and there's nothing on the visible horizon that looks set to come close). It's not a simulation, it's an experience ... Ocean's first flight sim is the best out!" Zzap 97%.



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SHADOW WARRIORS, the latest, greatest and most ambitious martial arts coin-op game now rages onto your computer featuring interactive scenic backdrops! The secrets of the Ninjitsu assassination techniques have been handed down since the Mediaeval wars...now they live on in the jungle of the American metropolis. A thousand years of the Ninjitsu secrets at your fingertips... the Phoenix Backflip, Triple Blow Combination, Flying Neck Throw, Hang Kick and more, give you a formidable armoury of stunning moves. Take your techniques to the streets **SHADOW WARRIOR...** the hero of the nineties.



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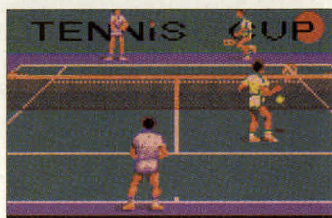
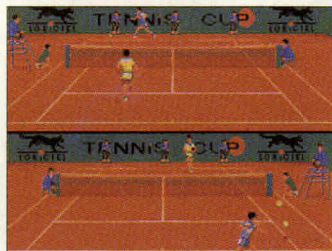
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TENNIS CUP

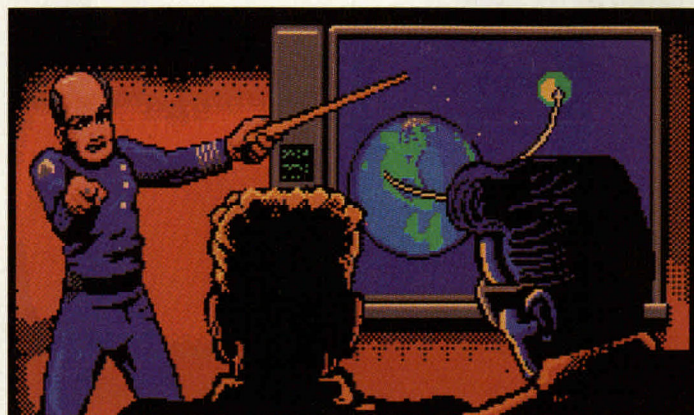
Loriciels' Tennis game is going to face a lot of competition within the next to months - is it any good?

74

ROBOT MONSTERS

Take two intrepid heros, add a mixture of comic-style presentation and metallic-mayhem and what do you get? Easy, Domark's newie!

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YOU HAVE BEEN SELECTED
AS A MEMBER OF AN
INTERPLANETARY SWAT TEAM!



DYNASTY WARS

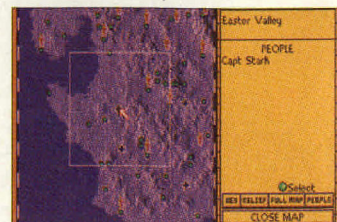
Following their conversion of Strider, Tiertex's next conversion is of Capcom's slay'em-up, Dynasty Wars. Check out our exclusive review.

26

MIDWINTER

Mike Singleton and Maelstrom games' long-awaited epic is finally here. AA dons its snowboots and heads for

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ENTS



CASTLE MASTER

Freescape returns in a new revamped and smoother adventure which pits you against all manner of strange and spooky ghosts.

38

ALL CHANGE!

There are going to be a few changes around here. Since our move up north, we have decided that it is time we took stock of Amiga Action and put your thoughts into practice. Most of you are happy with the game reviewing system, but a few changes will be added - not to the layout - but to the content, with more detailed captions and some clever use of the screenshots. However, it seems that you aren't too keen on the graphics and sound columns, so something radical will be happening with these, too.

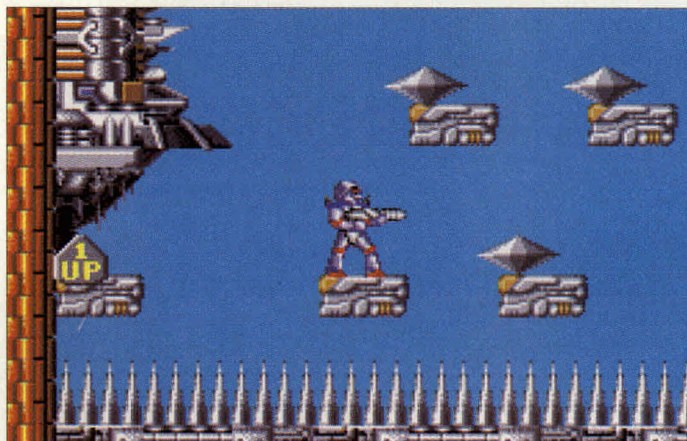
Also, to keep you up to date with all the hot new conversions, original titles and film tie-ins on their way, we'll be going out and about more to bring you the hottest news on the hottest games, along with indepth reviews with the people behind them.

We are open to any criticisms you have, so write in and together we can make this magazine even better than it already is - it sounds impossible, but it isn't!

KLAX

They say that the simplest ideas are the best, and Domark's brilliant conversion just proves it.

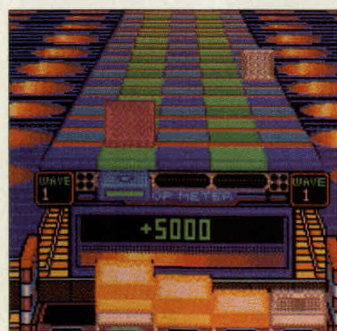
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TURRICAN

Rainbow Arts' new shoot'em-up is a massive shoot'em-up spread over hundreds of screens with plenty to see and kill - brilliant stuff!

66



SKIDZ

OK, all you hipsters, jump on the ecology bandwagon and clear up the streets in style with Gremlin's newie, Skidz. Watch out for the muggers, granies and dogs, though.

58



WIN!
WIN!
WIN!

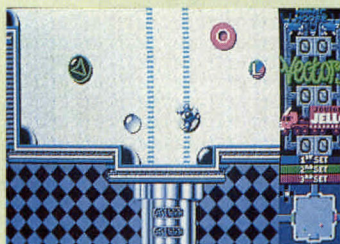
Once again, we have teamed up the the software houses behind this month's best games, and this month we are giving away a CD player from Rainbow Arts, and a Camcorder from those nice people at U.S. Gold.

53

SNIPPETS

EA'S DEADLY PROJECTYLE

Coming soon from Electronic Arts iS Projectyle, a futuristic sports game set in a metal-walled arena. Billed as a violent mixture of Ice Hockey and American Football, your basic aim is to score more games than your opponent. This is achieved by bouncing around an eight-way-scrolling pitch, and knocking the metal ball to and fro. In addition, just to add that certain competitive element, there is a Projectyle league, in which eight teams compete for the Projectyle trophy. Lots of extra features, such as varying skill and strength of players has to be taken into consideration, but how the whole caboodle plays you'll have to wait and see until the next issue. It'll be released then, priced at £24.99.



Futuristic mayhem in Electronic Arts' new futuresport - Projectyle!

OCEAN'S BIG MOVIE LICENCES FOR CHRISTMAS

Just announced for the busy Christmas season, are Ocean's big movie licences. First of all, Nightbreed, the Clive Barker-directed film based on his excellent book, Cabal, will spawn no less than three computer game: an RPG, an arcade/adventure, and a Cinemaware game. Of these, we are really looking forward to the Cinemaware-style game, but they won't be released until the film is sometime in September. Finally, after the abysmal red Heat, Arnie is making his 16-bit comeback in Total Recall, the licence of his new multi-multi-million dollar film. Set on Mars, Arnie is a cop and performs his violent task with pride - sound familiar? Expect reviews within the next couple of months.

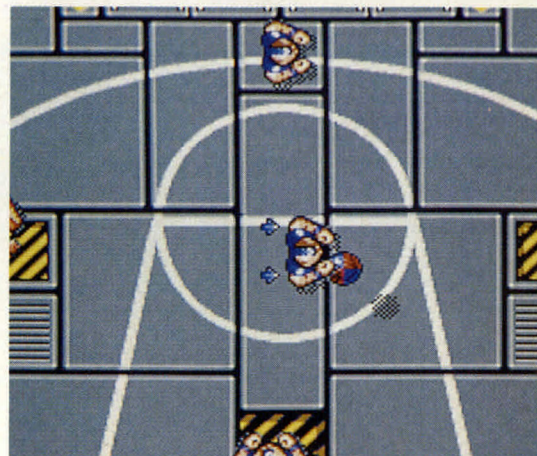
HEWSON STEP UP THE PACE

Shown at an early stage of development, Scavenger's graphics will be tweaked a little bit before the game is released.



After a surprisingly quiet couple of months, Abingdon-based Hewson are set to release no less than three new games upon an unsuspecting public. The first of the trio is the long-awaited newbie from Nebulus and Eliminator programmer, John Philips, and is an exploration through the world of time travel. Scavenger is a horizontally-scrolling puzzle game, with the eponymous hero scurry through the game's many time zones, collecting important artifacts as he does so. Having been banished to wander the time lanes for the rest of his life, Scavenger has stumbled across a way that may allow him to get home. By taking key items from one level and taking them to another zone, he will be able to open a path home, but along the way many enemy creatures will be out to stop him, and contact with them will result in our hero's death. Another well-known face from the Hewson stables is Pogo, the reptilian star of Hewson's aforementioned Nebulus. Previewed way back in Real Soon

Now, Nebulus II is now actually nearing completion, with most of the game's towers and bonus screens having been added. Once again, Pogo's home planet of Nor has had a selection of gaudy towers built in the middle of its picturesque seas, and, after his success in the first game, Pogo has been deemed just the man for the job of toppling them. However, whereas the towers in his first adventure were only vertical scrollers with a handful of traps and meanies, whoever built these towers obviously meant business, and has added almost twice as many hazards to thwart our scaly hero's plans. In addition, the game also features horizontally-scrolling sub-games that are dangerously close to the deadly seas below and more sub-



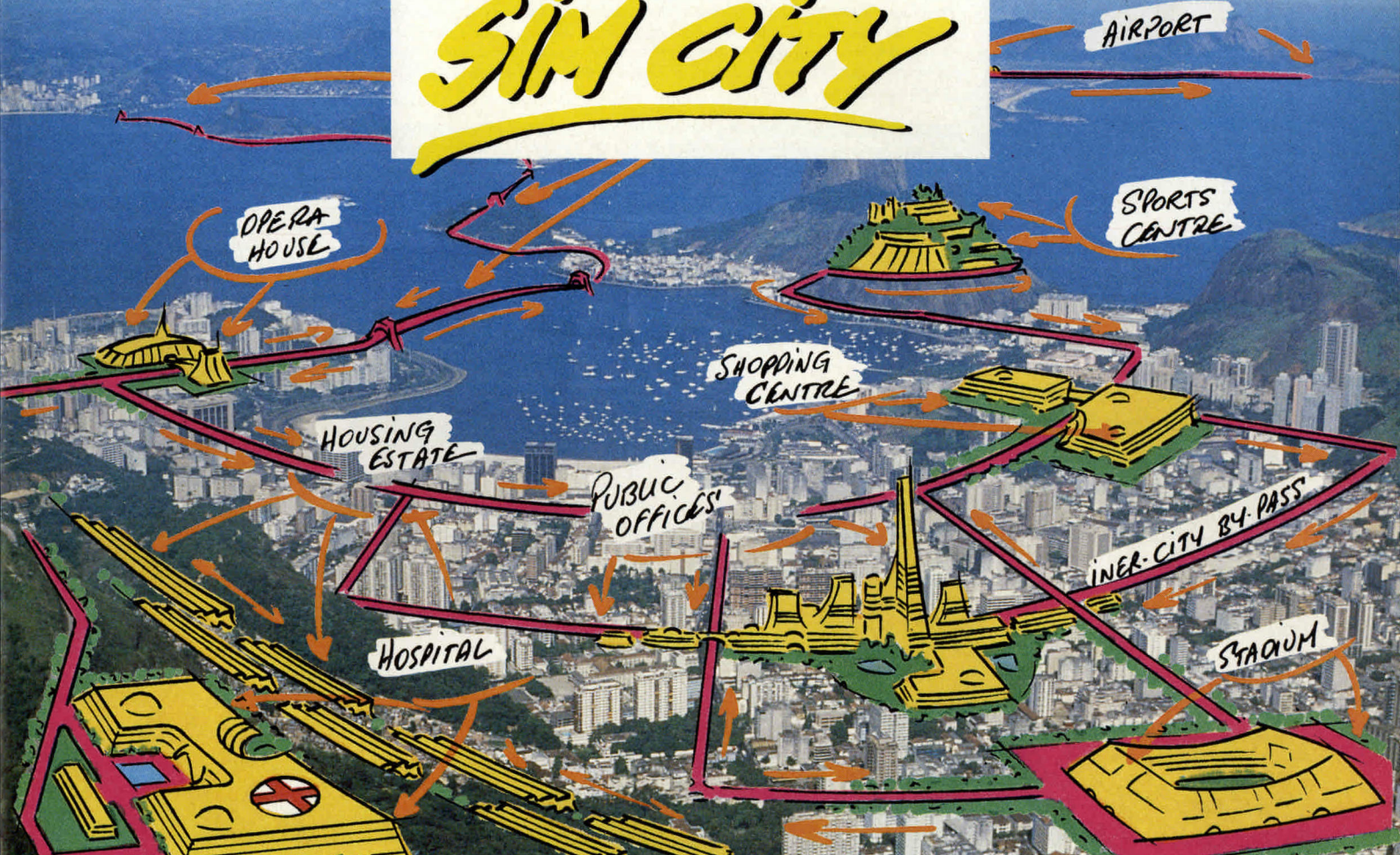
Looking just a little bit like the forthcoming Speedball II, Future Basketball takes the basic rules of the game and adds the missing element - violence!

games than the first game. For a fuller report check out our review in the next couple of months. Finally, completing their trio, Future Basketball is a rough'n'tumble sport featuring all of the rules of the conventional game with a few... er... interesting additions. Played within the confines of a metallic arena where there are three different pitch surfaces, Future Basketball can be played by one or two players, with six skill levels to choose from and two leagues. So far, the game looks just a teensy bit similar to the Bitmap's Speedball II, but to find out how the game plays you'll just have to wait until June. Finally, in case you were wondering, all three games will set you back 19.99 each.



Shown here, are examples of the vertical towers and the difficult platform-based sub-game in Pogo's latest escapade. Whilst the vertical towers look similar to those in the original game, extra bonuses, such as presents can be collected and there are more tower-based hazards than before, too. In addition, when crossing the horizontally-scrolling screens, the platforms sink under our hero's weight, so speed is of the essence to secure the bonus points.

SIM CITY



On seeing the crumbling estates, out-dated roads and rusty bridges of your city, how many times have you said "Put me in charge for a day and I'll make this wretched thing work!" Now, with Sim City, take the destiny of the world's greatest cities in hand. Or take charge of a new evolving and growing city. Become both mayor and city planner of a dynamic real-time simulation.



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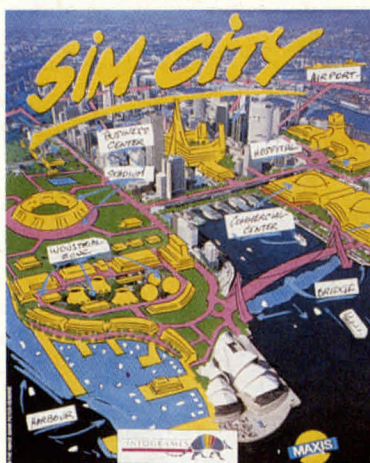
Raise and collect taxes, balance your budget, manipulate property values. Sim City is alive. It's loaded with animation and detailed sound effects. Build roads, cars appear. Lay tracks, trains go. Build an airport, planes fly. Neighbourhoods go upper-class. Areas deteriorate into slums. Small industries grow into huge factories. Everything is managed and animated in real



SIM CITY

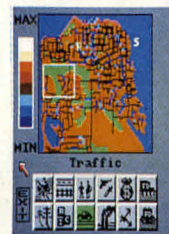
What you should know about the game of the year.

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time. Every decision instantly influences the life of your town.

In a special mode, you can even cause tornadoes, floods, fires and other disasters at your whim. Save San Francisco from the great earthquake of 1906. Or save Tokyo of pollution and from his famous B-movie monster. Sim City is an all-absorbing unique game which contains 8 pre-defined scenarios : e.g San Francisco, Tokyo, Rio de Janeiro... With it's exceptional depth of play, it's still simple to play with icons and graphics, without text commands.



Design and build the city of your dreams. Sim City gives you the keys. The rest is up to you.

INFOWORLD Volume II Issue 20 : "People playing Sim City are completely plugged into the world they create, disappearing for hours."
NEW YORK TIMES : "The model is very sophisticated, yet understandable. And just as important, it's fun, too."



INFOGRAVES



SNIPPETS

STRIKE ONE!



Full control is given over your hits in Cinemaware's Baseball, and several shots are available with a quick move of the stick to determine your style of shot.

Following on from last month's look at Mirrorsoft's new titles, here is a quick glimpse at the long-awaited TV Sports: Baseball. So far, it is looking very nice, but how it plays you will have to wait until at least August to find out. It'll feature all of the useful features, including leagues, that the other two games in the series had, and it'll also have the usual Cinemaware glitzy intros. Apart from that, that's all we know. More news as we get it.

GRANDSLAM GRAB ENGLAND

With a Liverpool licence in the offing, Grandslam are ready for the World Cup game rush with the advent of the official England team game. Taking control of our International squad you must guide them through the tournament and lift that trophy. Digitised piccies of all your England faves are there, as are all the stats you need to help you put out a balanced squad. A full squad of twenty-two players is at your disposal, and injuries are a common problem you will find yourself dealing with. Priced at Grandslam's usual twenty quid, it'll be out in time for the start of the World Cup.



As the game is in the early stages, there are no actual in-game screenshots to be seen. But for time being, here's a piccy of Peter Beardsley (unsurprisingly, another Grandslam game star) taking on the might of Sweden.

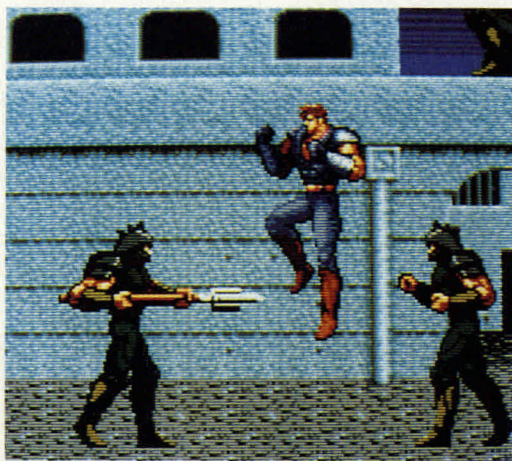
ELITE UNVEILS

The butch hero of the Last Battle comes up against an end-of-level guardian. Both characters' energy bar is shown beneath the play area, but your opponent starts with a distinct advantage as you will already have been drained by the hordes of enemy soldiers you fought your way through.



After a lot of secrecy, Elite have taken the wraps off their new line-up. All three are conversions of Sega games, and all three have been available on the grey imports of the Sega MegaDrive for quite some time now. The first of the three is a Kung-Fu Master (remember that?) variant called Last Battle. Featuring huge sprites, you control a rugged martial arts

expert who must make his way to where an evil warlord is waiting. The game is split into roughly thirty scrolling stages, and once you have defeated the end-of-level guys, access is granted to the map, and you guide a small icon towards your eventual destination. A number of offensive moves are available, ranging from flying kicks to crouch punches, but the enemy



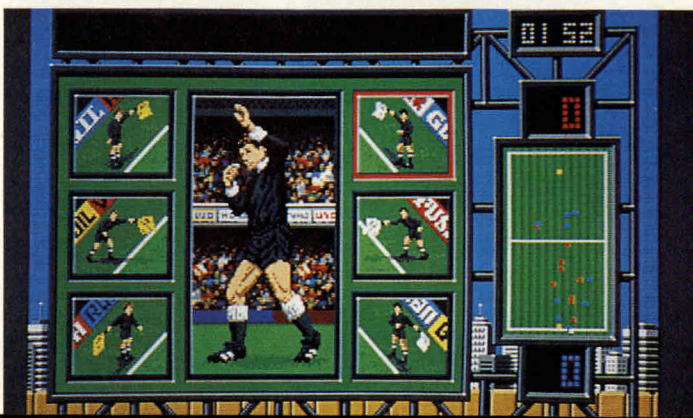
The enemy warriors come in many shapes and sizes, and most of them seem to be armed with deadly weapons. If you can avoid these, though, the cowardly enemies can be despatched with a few easy kicks or punches.



Oh, come on, you don't actually need a caption to work out what's going on here, do you?

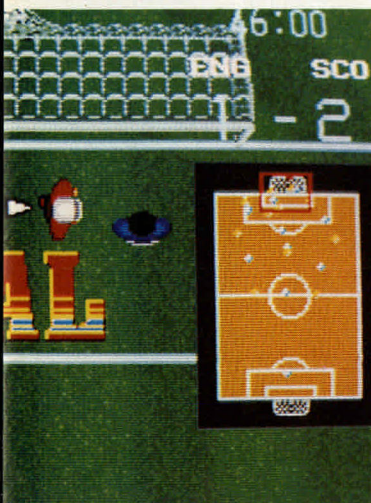
outnumber you heavily and also have the advantage of carrying weapons. Expect a review within the next few months. Following that, expect to see World Championship Soccer entering the competitive melee of footy games. An eight-way scroller viewed from above the pitch, Soccer is a fast'n'furious kick around in which you are given full control over a team of eleven players. A full complement of kicks, fouls, and basic rules is included, but whether it measures up against

THE MICROPROSE



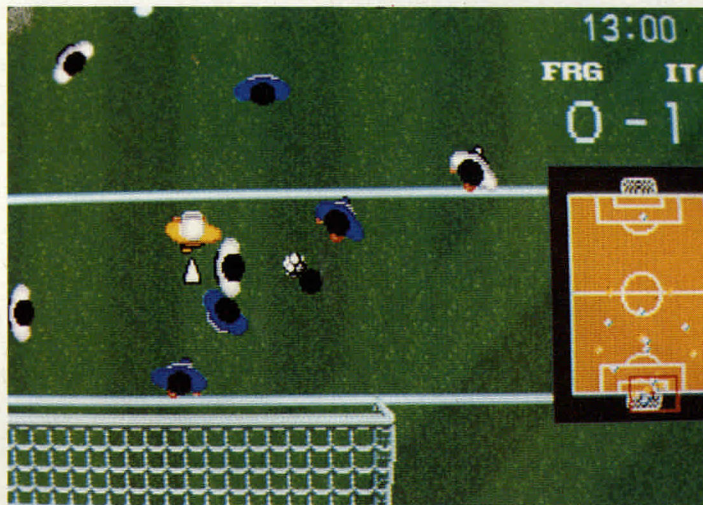
Coming soon from Microprose is the eagerly-awaited follow-up to Microprose Soccer. Leaving the overhead views of the original game behind, the game's programming team, Red Rat (the guys behind Lombard Rally and - arggh - Screaming Wind... sorry, Wings), have opted for a unique 3D environment which means you view the action as if you are running behind the player. A full complement of rules has been

NEW LICENCES



Virgin's and U.S. G's World Cup games remains to be seen. Still, you'll be able to see for yourself when we review it soon. Last, but by no means least, Elite grab their seven irons and prepare to take on the likes of Jack Nicklaus and Greg Norman in Tournament Golf. Featuring several eighteen-hole courses, and some neat graphical touches, such as a curvaceous female caddy (us, sexist?), Tournament Golf is completely joystick-controlled and allows you to select your clubs and determine

As in most footy games, control is given over the player nearest the ball, but by pressing can be swapped to the person you are passing to.



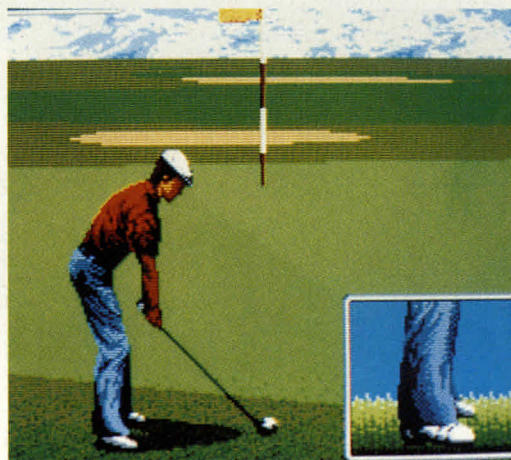
the strength and direction of your shots, as well as being careful not to slice the ball and send it into a bunker. All three games will cost 19.95 each, and will be reviewed as soon as they are complete.

One final note, we received Elite's long overdue Ghosts 'n' Goblins just past the deadline, which meant we couldn't squeeze a review in. Everything from the coin-

op seems to be there - even down to the slightly irritating in-game tune and nice touches, such as turning into a frog if you shoot the gravestones - and the game looks to be an almost perfect conversion. Until next month, though, I'm afraid you are going to have to wait with bated breath for the AA in-depth review. See you then.



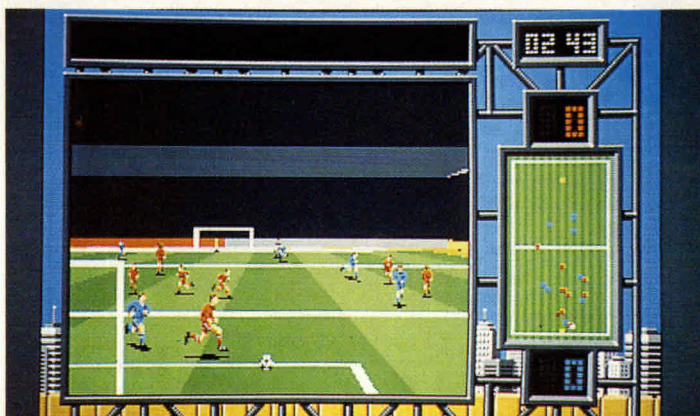
A map allows you to judge the best way to make your way past the bunkers to the hole, and a useful caddy advises you on your choice of club.



Your club is swapped to a putter when you are close to the hole, and everything has to be made perfect before attempting to sink the ball.

TEAM GO FOR GOAL

included, which means that any fouls or 'incidents' are instantly spotted by the vigilant computer ref. Also included, is a full tournament, with clubs from every country competing to lift the all-important trophy. Following up the playable Microprose Soccer won't be easy, but you'll be able to judge for yourselves when the game is released in time for the up and coming World Cup, priced £24.99.



SNIPPETS

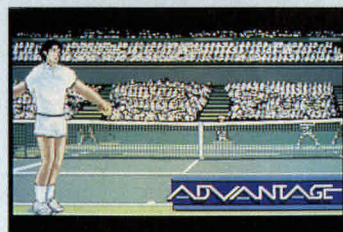
GRANDSLAM'S GRANDSLAM



It seems like TV Sports-style presenters are all the rage, so, keeping in with the fashion, Grand Slam's Tennis has one that announces the results and matches to be played.

Following on from the spate of World Cup games, it seems that Tennis games are all the rage amongst software houses. Ocean have a new one coming out, courtesy of Starbyte, and now Grand Slam have announced Grand Slam Tennis.

Featuring all the normal rules, Grand Slam Tennis is a one or two-player game that uses realistic large sprites as its main characters. Controlling your chosen player, you can take part in one of many tournaments and aim to collect the big money prizes. A wealth of different shots are all easily accessible, and all these will help you reach your ultimate aim - the Grand Slam trophy. Priced at £19.99, it'll be out within the month.

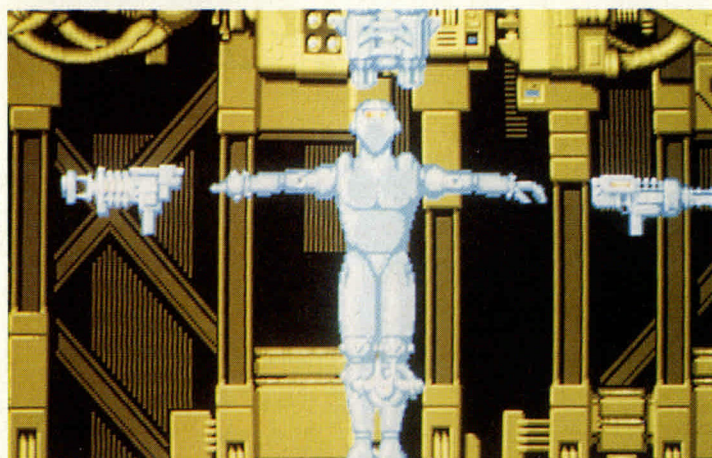


In between rallies, a computer-controlled umpire calls the decisions.

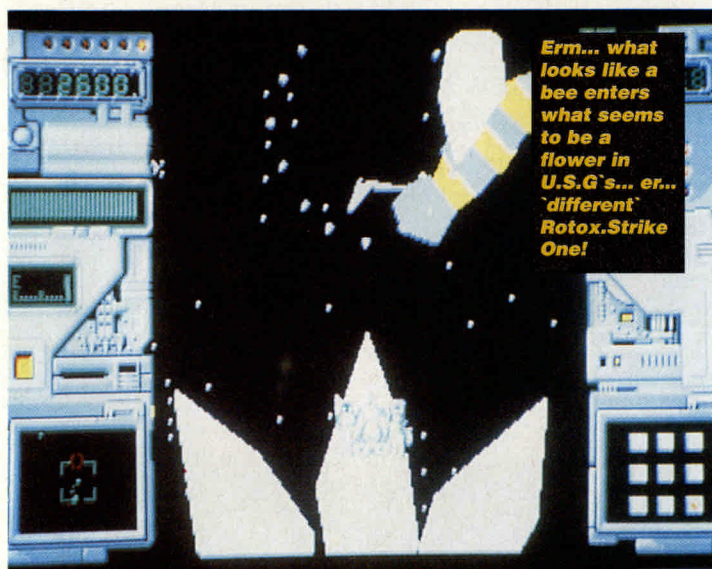
VIZ DELAYED

Virgin Game's hotly-awaited Viz game has unfortunately been delayed until the new year. The first draft for the game was deemed too tame, and other problems mean that Probe's game won't make it to our screens until January or February (Fnar, Fnarl)

GOLDEN WONDERS

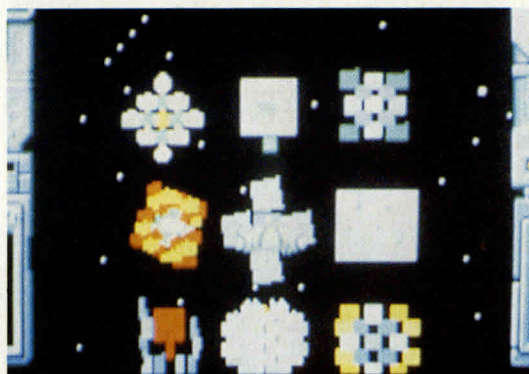


U.S. Gold's bionic hero, Rotox, is put together before he enters battle for the first time.



Birmingham-based U.S. Gold are about to release a trio of unusual and unlicensed products. First off we have Rotox, a strange-looking shoot'em-up using a new graphics technique called Rotorscan. As a member of a crack team of commandoes, you have been badly injured by a stray bullet and, as the company you work for practically owns you, you have been taken away to be the guinea pig in a new weaponry experiment. This basically means that, having added a compact computer to your brain and having transformed parts of your body into robotic limbs, you are now one of the most perfect killing machines ever designed. The game begins with you about to embark on your first mission - ten levels of deadly aliens that are threatening to attack Earth. Armed with a whole range of devastating weaponry, including scatter bombs, grenades and heat-seekers, you must guide Rotox

safely through the ten levels, blasting everything in your way. It'll be out in June, so get your trigger fingers practising. Next, we can expect Billy Boulder, an American-developed game, in which the eponymous hero must find a mad old wizard and get him to reverse the spell that turned a beautiful Princess into a lump of granite. At present, we don't have a lot of info, but expect a review within two months. Finally, Epyx make a long-awaited return with the release of Snow Strike. The English team behind the brilliant Games: Summer Edition, The Code Monkeys, are writing the game for the Amiga and it sets you the unenviable task of flying into a dangerous jungle and attempting to thwart the plans of a vicious drug baron. Sounding a little like Infiltrator, there are ten increasingly difficult levels, and a whole host of perils waiting for you. Quite why it's called Snow Strike when it's set in the South American jungles we don't know, but expect a review in August. Each game will cost U.S.G's usual price, and we'll keep you posted on any changes of release date.

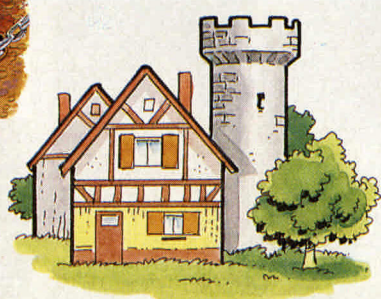


(Left) There are ten stages of hectic blasting to make your way through in Rotox, but luckily you are armed with everything from heat-seeking missiles to a jet-pack.

FLIGHT OF THE DRAGON



To aid you through the game's trouble spots, Dragonflight's novella will prove indispensable. It details the whereabouts and people within each city, and is full of useful clues.



Mentioned way back - after last year's PC Show, in fact - the long-awaited Thalion epic, Dragonflight, is now nearing completion. An RPG encompassing many other styles of gameplay, the game pits your band of four warriors against the might of evil forces who are out to destroy your race's all-important dragons. Set over many different

lands, each with their own problems and nasties, Dragonflight's unique interaction system means that the characters you are guiding seem to have a mind of their own - for instance, they may squabble amongst themselves of talk incessantly. Likewise, the cities you explore house different characters with different personalities, giving the game an edge of uncertainty as to whether the inhabitants are friendly when you arrive.

At present, the finishing touches are being added to the game, but the main bulk of the gameplay is already there. Complete with a ten-thousand word novella, the game will be released on the Grandslam label sometime next month, priced at £29.95 - expect a review next month.



The game's programmers turn to the occult to finish the game!



In the forest, one of our heroes meets a blue-cloaked death fan.

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SNIPPETS

FORD LICENCE FOR THALAMUS

You, too, can pretend to be a mad, Sierra-driving sales rep in Thalamus's newie.



After a surprisingly quiet few months, Thalamus are set to release a licensed version of the Q8 Team Ford Rally. Gripping the wheel of your 4X4 Cosworth, you must sharpen up all your map-reading and driving skills as you prepare to race through the night over three stages. All the usual rally hazards are present and your car can only survive a few prangs, so care, as well as speed, are of the essence. At present, the game only exists as a very impressive stripey road demo, but more news nearer its May/June release.

AQUATIC ANTICS

After the ground-breaking Populous, top development house Bullfrog are just putting the final touches on Flood, an arcade-style game in which you play the last surviving member of a once prosperous race who is in search of civilisation. However, where he lives is gradually being flooded, and you must guide Quiffy (because of his hair) away from the water and from the pursuing nasties.

Promising some nice graphical touches and animation, Flood will be reviewed - hopefully - next month.



Aqualung adventures in Electronic Art's cutesy platform romp, Flood.

3001: A SPACE ODDITY

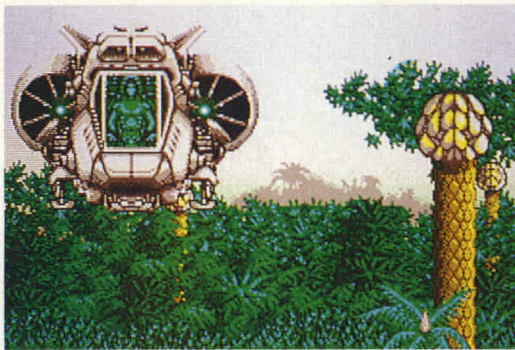


Whilst travelling towards its destination, the Starblade is attacked by several of the insect-like aliens's ships.

Coming soon from Palace is the second game to emerge from their deal with French development house, Silmarils. Leaving the old Wild West behind them, their new release is called Starblade, a futuristic space opera, with you as its hero. The year is 3001 and in the wide

expanse known as the Orion galaxy, human colonists are struggling. Insect-like aliens and their massive queen have reproduced a hundredfold and now they have enough warrior creatures to overrun the cosmos. Already, several human colonies have been lost to the insect-like

legions, and before they take over any more, their number must be curbed. However, the only information gleaned that can put an end to the deadly race is lost somewhere on one of the insect's new host planets. A professor Julius Gordon had secreted the information on a number of floppy disks, but when the planet he was based on was colonised by the insects the disks had to be hidden before he was eaten. It was Gordon's last act, and your only hope of solving the mystery of how to destroy the queen alien and her minions. Your mission is split into several sections, with you piloting your Starblade and then leaving its relative safety to go off in search of the all-important disks. Every now and then, though, you will come up against several of the insect aliens and these must be defeated before your search can continue. It'll be out next month, priced 24.99.



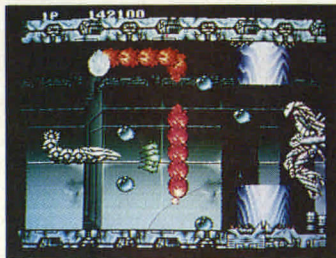
Once you have managed to avoid the aliens and enter the planet's atmosphere, a short animated sequence shows your ship 'dusting down' on a relatively safe part of the planet.

Your search for Gordon's disks will take you all over the place, but useful clues can be collected along the way to make your task easier.



SALES CURVE STORM AHEAD

The brilliant Jaleco coin-op Saint Dragon makes its way to the Amiga. So prepare those trigger fingers for some serious blasting.



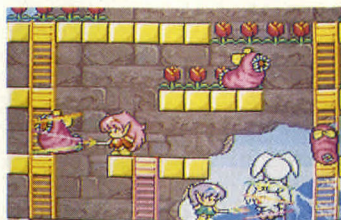
Following last month's snippet on development house, The Sales Curve, going it alone, they have now unveiled their new label and the first three licences to appear. Storm is the new company's name, and every new title is a

conversion of a Jaleco coin-op. First of all, we have Saint Dragon, a Nemesis-style horizontally-scrolling shoot'em-up, with aliens and add-ons a-plenty. Random Access are in the process of transferring the game to the Amiga, and it will be available sometime at the end of the year.

Next, you can expect to see Rod-Land, a cutesy platform game along the lines of Bubble Bobble. One or two players can play and the sappy scenario has you collecting flowers whilst avoiding the evil sharks and bunnies who are out to stop you. Finally, Random Access are also converting the excellent road-race game, Big Run, over to the Amiga, but, as with the other titles, you probably won't see anything until Christmas.



Racing mayhem in the forthcoming Big Run.



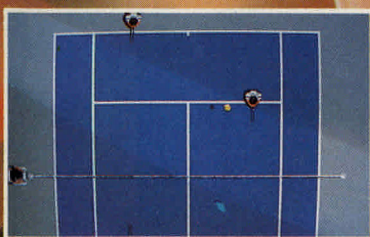
Finally, cutesy capers with Random Access's Rod-Land conversion.

adidas



CHAMPIONSHIP

Tie Break

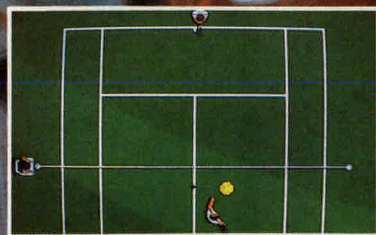


Pin 'em to the baseline, attack the net and volley the winner! You

might have taken this match but that was on grass - can you play as well on

clay or on the indoor courts?... with **TIE-BREAK** you'll soon find out! And the play selection doesn't end there - play singles or doubles, select to play in all the major tournaments such as Wimbledon, Davis Cup, French Open and many more. You can then make a racquet selection - and that could win you the match!

Featuring all the shots in the book, breathtaking animation and amazingly realistic speech and sound effects in T.V. style presentation make **TIE-BREAK** the out and out winner on any micro.



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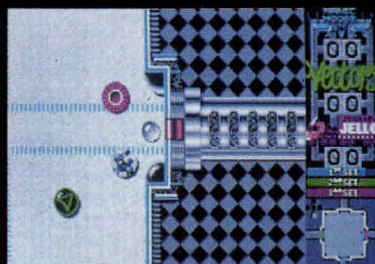
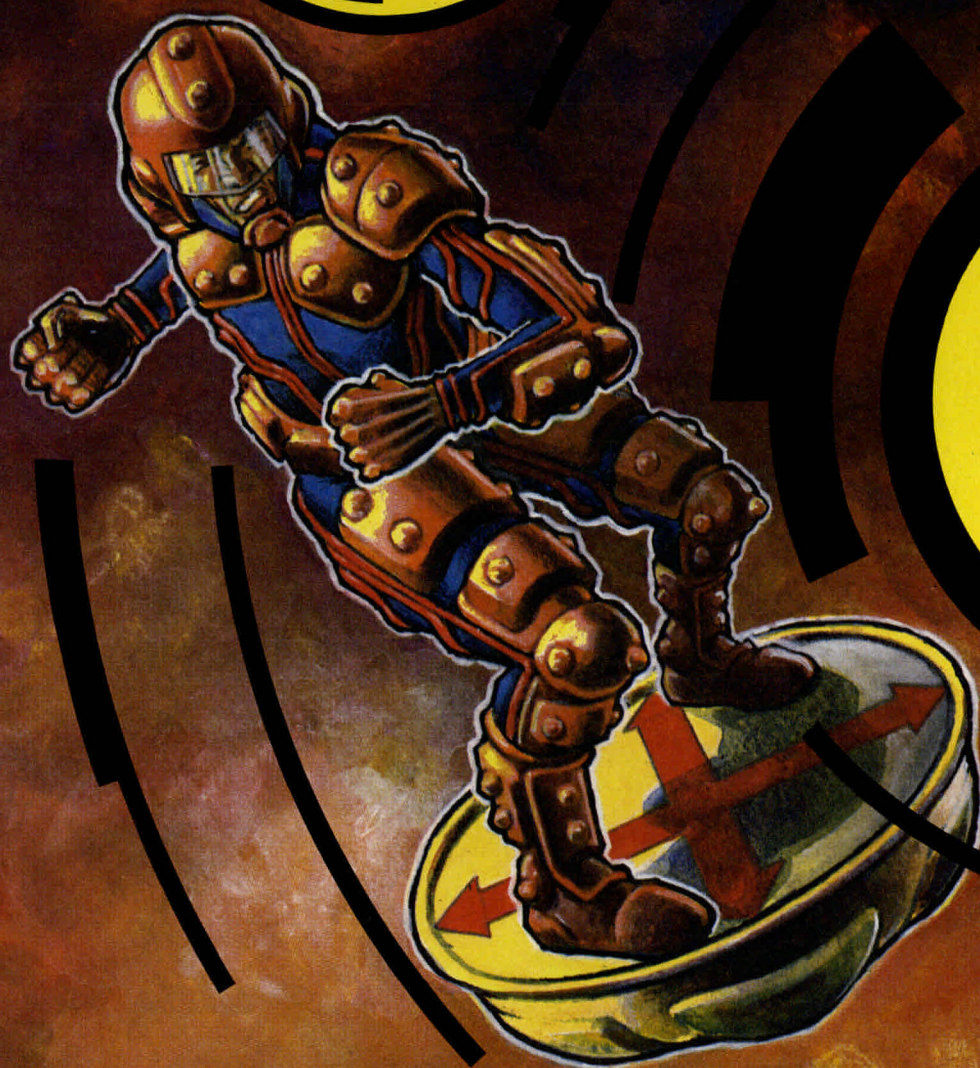


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Boggits Domain

Being only small does have its advantages. For a start, having your ears at keyhole height comes in very handy while wandering around the corridors of Software houses. Once again, I left the security of my hollow Blackthorn tree and I've been braving the traffic of London to seek out new and exciting games.

My original purpose was to find out how the sequel to *LEGEND OF THE SWORD, THE FINAL BATTLE* adventure game, was progressing in the backrooms of Mirrorsoft, but instead I stumbled upon a game which is certain to cut a swathe through the ranks of the new releases. The name to watch out for is *BATLEMASTER* because someone has taken large spoonfuls of adventuring, fantasy role playing and war games, and mixed them together to produce something really novel. The nearest thing I can compare it with is an *ULTIMA*-style role-playing game which has leaped forward a couple of years bringing to it the badly needed 16 bit graphics and animation. There are puzzles to solve, castles and caves to explore and real animated battles featuring weapon-wielding men and monsters. The world of *BATLEMASTER* is inhabited by the four races of Humans, Elves, Dwarves and Orcs. From these races the player can assemble a whole army and lead them through the kingdom encountering strange creatures who may assist or hinder the quest.

What is most amusing is watching your motley rabble form into the various attack formations before a battle. Initially they are ill-disciplined and inexperienced which makes them difficult to control, but time and training will turn them into a formidable team who can charge through the toughest opposition. Your troops are capable of wielding clubs, swords and bows and arrows. If *BATLEMASTER* lives up to its initial promise it will be a game that will change the face of war



Having problems with Sierra's first King's Quest? The fear no more, the mighty Boggit is to the rescue!

gaming.

After what seems like an eternity, Magnetic Scrolls have finally re-emerged from a dark hole in the ground to reveal a particularly colourful white rabbit. Grinning like Cheshire Cats the Virgin Publishers announced that the new-look adventure will be based on the adventures of Alice in Wonderland. Turning away from their popular text adventures, Scrolls have now focused their attention on a mouse/icon style game featuring graphic animation, multiple windows, pop-up menus and auto-mapping. Your task will be to explore Wonderland solving such puzzles as how to draw treacle from a treacle well or how to help the gardeners paint all of the roses in time for the inspection by the dreaded Queen of Hearts. All the well-loved characters of Lewis Carroll's bizarre imagination are here. The Mad Hatter and the March Hare are still having their tea party and they are still doing unspeakable things to that poor dormouse! The game will be available in June, with hopefully a press launch beforehand which the Boggit will attempt to gate-crash. There had just better be more to drink than tea!

I have also been along to take a peep at *LOOM* which is the next graphic adventure to be released from LUCASFILMS. At present only the IBM PC version is on demo, but it looks very nice and fans of the previous hits, *Zak*, *Maniac*

Mansion and *Indiana Jones*, should keep on eye out for this Magic and Sorcery tale. I note that the *Indiana Jones Adventure* has been picking up Best Adventure Awards all over the shop with *Future Wars* winning Best Music. The French software company Delphine (creators of *Future Wars*) are currently finishing *OPERATION STEALTH* which is a spy adventure featuring arcade action as well as puzzles. I'm always a little suspicious of an adventure that boasts 'Includes Superb Arcade Action', but we'll wait and see.

Well, I've fed my owl, Archimedes, I've fortified myself with a mug of spiced-elderberry wine; I suppose I'd better turn to this month's sack of mail.

Your own Personal Nightmare of The Lost Personal Savings Book

Horror struck me when I found out that there isn't any Savings Book in the Vicarage Bedroom of PERSONAL NIGHTMARE like you said in the March Issue. Please can you tell me exactly how to find it? I hope that it isn't a bug in my copy.

Frido Nahon, Soest, Holland

Frido my son, that's a lovely adventuring name you've got. You don't happen to be any relation to Bilbo Baggins do you? Anyway I'm surprised you have time to waste

on playing adventure games. Should you not be sticking things in holes in dykes or something? You've obviously got a terrible memory or you would have remembered that you hid your Savings Book inside an adventure novel where it would be safe from thieves. Try reading the books in your bedroom and you'll be surprised what will fall out. I suppose anyone who wears wooden shoes is liable to get confused very easily. Still, it could be worse. If you were an Atari ST user you would also have to wear a wooden head.

Adventuring - Just Kid's Play?

Here I am, 37 years old. and not a fellow computer gamer in sight. But alas, you are not to be burdened with that.

I would be obliged if you could recommend a couple of adventures specifically for either morons or very young children (i.e. 8 and 6 years). Presumably something with graphics to 'Ooooh' over and easy, repeat easy, puzzles to work out. Hopefully there is something on the market that uses logic which even laymen such as myself and my offspring can get to grips with.

It's nice to read a games-oriented magazine that does not treat all its readers like 14 year olds. Computer gaming is a great way to relax and I feel that if more coverage was given through the media then a whole new group of computer people would result.

M. Barker, Leeds

Fancy complaining at not being bothered by other computer nuts - what I wouldn't give. As for easy adventures, well that's a little awkward because there ain't that many around. I think your best bet is something like the BLACK CAULDRON from Sierra-on-Line. This is a graphic adventure written for kids based on the Disney Movie of the same name. The trouble with buying games written just for kids is that the kids know it and resent it. What is needed is something that is good for both young kids and old ones. In this case you need a game that's tolerant of idiots. They might not

solve the puzzles, but the game will let them wander, see the sights and enjoy just controlling the action. In this case I reckon the King's Quest Triple pack (again from Sierra-on-Line) takes some beating. This contains three complete games and it costs about the same price as a single game. The first two games are 'easier' than many other adventures, whilst KINGS QUEST III is a game which will keep both kids and adults spellbound. I know of many human children that have played KQ III for weeks - they never actually solved the puzzles, but they still had a great time. Personally I favour giving human children something really exciting to play with - like a crocodile!

The Mystery of Bloodwych's Dragon Tower Revealed

I am stuck in the Bloodwych Dragon Tower. I worked my way through the level where there are arc bolts firing continually from a hole in the wall. There is a Serpent Door near there, but I don't have the key so I went back to the level nearby which has 3 red buttons, 1 yellow and 1 blue on the walls. There is a small room on the other side of a green psychic barrier which I think has the serpent key in it. I can't get to the room because a pillar comes up in front of me when I step on the barrier. How do I get into the room?

Please help or I will be forced to head-bang myself to death while listening to a trash album.

Rick Houghton, Hull

Firstly, the yellow buttons and the door are a complete red-herring -

you cannot get through the door. (Blooming great - just what you needed!) The solution involves going backwards and forwards between the two red buttons in the right sequence, but it is complicated by two invisible pads in the floor which reset the sequence. The procedure is:-

- Locate the pads - a Firepath spell can be used for this, as it won't light up invisible pads.
- Follow the left wall round and press the red button. Return to the door.
- Follow the right wall round (going around a pillar) and press the red button. The pillar will disappear. Return to the door (going through where the pillar used to be to avoid one of the pads).
- Follow the left wall and press the red button a second time.
- Return to the left-hand button - a section of wall will have disappeared revealing a key to the portcullis.
- Go through the portcullis and press the blue button.
- Return to the left-hand button and you will find a section of wall has disappeared, revealing a key to the whole area.

Remember, stepping on one of the invisible pads at any point resets the whole sequence.

'And so, with little or no difficulty, you solve the mystery'. BLOODY HELL!!!

The Joker in the Kings Quest Triple Pack

Help me Boggit, I think I'm going mad! Last night I was playing Kings Quest II from the Triple Pack

Name :



Strength	10
Intelligence	25
Agility	15
Vitality	15
Luck	10

Weapon Use	10
Parry	0
Dodge	15
Stealth	0
Pick Locks	0
Throwing	0
Climbing	0
Magic	25

Points Available

50 / 50

Health Points	13 / 13	TAB to move around, Arrows to adjust values. Start Game Cancel
Stamina Points	15 / 15	
Magic Points	25 / 25	

A novel departure from their adventure games, Sierra leave Larry, Rosella, and co behind and enter into the RPG arena.

Fancy a flying lesson in Castle Master? Easy, just stand on the drawbridge, and throw a stone at the recess to its left - voila! Instant levitation!



of Sierra's Kings Quest series when I saw something that boggled my brain. I was returning to the cave of Hagatha the Witch when suddenly a BATMOBILE drove out!!

I told my brother, but when he came to look it had gone and now it won't return. Now nobody believes me and my mum says I've been playing computer games for too long and she's going to make me cut down on my adventuring. Tell them I'm right Boggit or I'll be having my peripherals cut off.

Bob (Robin) Greenway, Kingsdown

Are you sure it wasn't Santa's sledge being pulled by a green giraffe? My first reaction to your letter was to throw it in the bin, but I have looked into your delusion a little deeper and although I haven't actually seen this amazing sight, I have found something in the K. Q. Hint book that says:- Sometimes something silly happens when you approach Hagatha's cave, but only rarely. So perhaps there is still a chance that you are sane - but I ain't prepared to put money on it. If you are looking for other silly happenings in KQII try kissing Hagatha, or asking "who wrote this game?"

Pick of the INFOCOM Bunch

O'Great Boggit, I badly need your advice. I am a lover of text adventures and especially love INFOCOM. The problem is that there are so many good games I

don't know which one to choose. I'm going to buy either TRINITY, KING ARTHUR, BALLYHOO or LEATHER GODDESS OF PHOBOS but I don't know which is better. Could you please tell me which game to choose and I don't care if you print the answer until the beginning of next Spring because it will take me that long to save up enough money!

I have completed Leisure Suit Larry II, Hitchhiker, Battletech and Ultima VI. If you want any help with these don't hesitate to ask.

Niall Grey, Dublin

Well, I have taken a side swipe at each of these games so I do know a little of them. TRINITY has a lovely feel to it as it was written by a natural storyteller, however it is difficult. KING ARTHUR is easier and has lots of pretty pictures. BALLYHOO feels like a real traditional text adventure full of mystery and whoodunits. I was disappointed in LEATHER GODDESS as I don't think it was as funny, or as rude, as the box promised. If you promise something then don't chicken out - go for it!

If I had to choose one from your list then I would strongly consider BALLYHOO, followed by TRINITY as they have bags of atmosphere.

On the subject of your poverty, I should mention that I do not have solutions for either KING ARTHUR, BALLYHOO or ULTIMA VI, perhaps it's a good time to remind you human peasants that I do 'GIVE' (oh that hurts!) prizes of

free software for solutions that I don't already possess.

Strike the Mother Lode in GOLDRUSH

Well BOGGS I am stuck in Sierra's GOLDRUSH. I have found my brother's Mine under the Bog, (I didn't notice you on the way down!), but I can't get past the locked door. How do you open it? Can you also tell me if the Mexican gold disc which I found in the Panama jungle comes in handy?

R. Price, Cardiff

No, no, the gold disc is completely useless. I would get rid of it immediately. Put it in a strong envelope and post it straight away to me here at the Blackthorn Tree. As for the locked door, well you'll be pleased to know that your brother has left the key lying beside the door for you. Unfortunately, like yourself he's not very bright and he's left it at the other side of the door. (Don't humans make you weep sometimes?). The key is made of iron which is important to know. If you look at the branding iron you got from the Blacksmith (you did get it didn't you?) you'll get a clue on how to retrieve the key. The two things you need are in the hotel bedroom, namely, some string from the floor and a @%*\$!

I'll let you work the other one out.

ZAK Draws a Blank With the Riddle of the Sphinx

I am writing to you to ask if you have a hint book for ZaK McKracken. If not, can you tell me how to complete the drawing on the Sphinx in Egypt and how do you get into the hair salon?

Cris Thomas, Birmingham

Yes, I have got a hint book thanks very much! To solve the riddle of the Sphinx you need a yellow crayon which you must use on the strange markings. The design you need is found in the map room inside the Face on Mars. Doing this will open a route into the Sphinx Maze. There is no need to get into the Hair Salon as there is nothing in there.

A Quick Shift

I'm stuck in Dungeon Master. I'm on Level 4 and I've only got one key left because I did not go into all the rooms on Level 3. On Level 4 there is a pad on the floor which, when you step on it, opens a gate. When you step off again the gate closes. I've dropped all my things on it but it does not hold the gate open for me to get through. Can you help me? Is there a cheat mode or some way of cheating on this brill game. Why don't you do a complete guide to Dungeon Master?

Chris, Norfolk

What a foolish, miserable human you are. The game is brilliant because it is a large treasure trove of mystery that you must explore. It wouldn't be brilliant if you could cheat. There are a few problems that might confound your muddled brain and it's fair that you should have some help from time to time, but you don't need a complete solution. Woe unto the creators of Dungeon Master Cheats for they shall feel the power of the Boggit's wrath.

As for your ill-defined problem I assume you are referring to the gate at the far end of a corridor which opens when you step on the pressure pad, but closes before you can run through. What you need is something to move you a bit faster down the corridor. I could suggest 'Essence of Prune Juice', but if you examine the wall you will find a small button which will do just as well. Press the button and it will shoot you forward. A few more quick steps and you should just scrape under the closing gate.

Be Quick On The Draw With Police Quest I

Dear Bogbrush! I have a problem with Police Quest I. I can't get past the scene in which I have to order some bikers (mean, tough and nasty at that) to move their bikes from the parking space in front of Carol's Caffeine Castle Cafe.

Speaking to the world: "Does anyone know how to conquer this

Could this be THE best RPG since Champions of Krynn? Check out our Sword of Aragon review next month.



problem!"

J. Wadia, Surrey

All you need do is remember the Boggit's Motto:- 'Talk quietly and carry a big stick!' The Police Manual says you should use appropriate force where necessary. Unfortunately, the Department doesn't consider a bazooka appropriate so when the greaser begins to make his move, hit the function key which whips out your nightstick. Once he sees that you are ready to raise a few lumps, he will soon back off.

Stone Dead in KINGS QUEST III

I have been playing Kings Quest for months, but now I'm finally stuck. I can't find the money to buy the objects from the store. Has it got anything to do with the hole in the tree or the Spider's Web (I still can't kill it!).

Also, where is the cactus juice and the coloured stone because I've looked everywhere for them.

P.S. Why haven't the muggers in the tavern ever got drunk, I would have by now.

A Major, Oxon

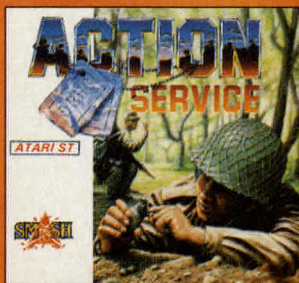
Well, you are certainly warm. If you found the hole in the base of the big tree why didn't you put your hand inside and see what would happen? If you do, you will find a rope which you can pull to release a rope ladder which leads up into the branches above. Up

there is the solution to your money problems. The stone you seek is inside the Spider's Cave. As for the cactus juice, well that's easy - it's inside a cactus of course. Now I'm sure that even a piggy-eyed human can't have failed to notice the vast desert, and that's where the cactus is. There are many cacti (or as Atari users would say - cactusis!) scattered around, but you will be told which one looks special. DON'T keep a look out for Medusa or you'll regret it. Instead make sure you are facing the other way and when she gets close SHOW MIRROR TO MEDUSA she'll then get quite hard-faced about things and leave you alone.

Finally, I must thank Colin Wong of Darlington for his solution to Dragon's Lair - Escape from Singe's Castle. Assuming you actually paid hard cash for this, Colin, you are obviously over-paid, as I believe it costs an arm and a leg to buy. I did borrow a Dragon's Lair game, but it drove me mad with frustration and it very quickly got thrown into the Petunia Patch at the bottom of my garden.

Send your letters, queries, solutions or hate mail with a S.A.E.

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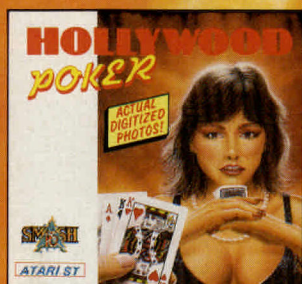
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BUY IT NOW

A Dorset Poet (And He Didn't Know It).

Computer mags come far and wide
What we usually get when we look
inside
It's black and white pictures and
boring writing
Amiga Action is much more exciting
It's colourful and packed with lots
to see
And when it comes to games, you're a
great help to me
Before buying a game, I read the
review
I've bought Fiendish Freddy and
Xenon II
The graphics and sound are 100%
Thanks to you it's money well spent
There's nothing worse than being
ripped off
By a company whose games are nothing
but soft
From my Amiga that stuff is now
barred
I'm a fan of your mag, and I say
it's 'well 'ard!'

Andy Collins, Christchurch.

AA: Well, bugger me, a poem that ain't lame
For all your trouble, accept a free game.

Retaliator Problems.

Upon returning from hospital after a
sudden attack of acute appendicitis,
I decided to purchase a new game as
I was feeling a bit run-down after
my near-death experience with the
NHS. I was lucky to have a copy of
your latest magazine with me while I
was in hospital, and after reading
your in-depth reviews, decided upon
buying either Conqueror or F-29
Retaliator.

My local software stockists said
that Conqueror and Retaliator
weren't released, so, 'OK', I
thought, 'I'll wait.' One week
later, I called again and received
the same excuse, but luckily I was
armed with a copy of your mag and
decided to show the assistant the
release dates quoted. Her reaction
was, to say the least, minimal.

Yet another week later, I called
in again and confronted another
member of staff who I knew was more
in-touch with the Amiga software
scene. This time their excuse was
more convincing. Conqueror was
released but withdrawn due to bugs,
but Retaliator was out and I
promptly bought it.

Upon arriving home and booting it
up, I noticed several bugs...

1. My gear wouldn't come up.
2. My flaps wouldn't come back

up.

3. I couldn't get my correct
payload.

4. If I had my weapon state in
panel one, the brown and red
artificial horizon in panel two, and
anything but the map in panel three,
it would flicker beyond recognition.

5. A badly written and misleading
manual.

I was pretty disgusted with my
purchase and hurriedly returned the
game to the shop from which I bought
it. The man in the shop watched as I
demonstrated the bugs I had found,
and agreed it was
faulty. He tried a different copy,
but it turned out to have all of the
bugs mine had, so I asked for my
money back.

Just out of interest, I journeyed
to another computer shop in my area
and tried out a copy of the game
from their shelves - even that had
the same bugs. I noticed, however,
that the manual in their box was
fatter, better-bound and more
detailed than my spindly little
leaflet, and I left the shop very
annoyed.

Now you've heard the sad story of
my consistently marred recovery
from hospital, and I wonder if, in
your infinitely deep hearts, you
could possibly tell me if F-29 does
have bugs or if it's just me; also
whether, it is true that Conqueror
had bugs.

A. Foulds, Nottingham.

AA: What a sad tale! When Retaliator was
released, the first shipment had the bugs you
mentioned in it. However, these were
soon withdrawn and now, an Ocean bod
reliably informs me, a bug-less version of the
game is now out. As for Conqueror, yes it
was bugged, the strategy mode had a large
fault in it, but it's OK now.

TV Sports Query.

Could you please tell me what
percentage you would give the Three
Stooges by Cinemaware and tell me
whether it is worth the thirty quid
asking price. Actually, whilst on
the subject of Cinemaware, I have
heard that there are plans to make
TV Sports: Soccer, is this true. If
so, will it be better than Kick Off?
Russel Clamp, Bognor Regis.

AA: The Three Stooges is one of the early
Amiga Cinemaware games, and relies more
on graphics than playability. And, to tell you
the truth, it doesn't play well at all and most
certainly isn't worth thirty quid. Also, TV

Sports: Soccer won't be finished for yonks,
and only time will tell if it's better than Anco's
masterpiece.

Hot Rod Scrapped.

The other day I went out and spent
twenty quid on the much-hyped Hot
Rod. I took it home and it didn't
load, and on getting a replacement
was very disappointed. I could
scream at wasting the money. Why do
they produce such junk?

Carl Horstman, Merseyside.

AA: We agree that Hot Rod isn't that great,
but, then again, neither was the coin-op it
was converted from. As a basic rule, though,
wait until you see a review before splashing
out - it'll save both dosh and tears.

Questions, Questions...

I've recently become an Amiga owner,
and am wondering if there is a
Doctor Who RPG/adventure available.
Also, has Atari's I-Robot arcade
game ever been converted? And could
you recommend a good beginner's
detective adventure (i.e. something
that is fairly easy to get into with
good atmosphere and a decent plot).
I've played some on the 64 that I
couldn't fathom out or bored me
rigid with unnecessary detail at the
expense of user-friendliness.

Michael Smith, Godshill.

AA: Sorry I had to cut your query about
reviewing old games, but it is a well-worn
topic and one that we are now looking into.
No, there isn't a Doctor Who game, but I
dare say when the movie starts getting
hyped someone will grab the licence -
there's certainly a lot of scope for one. As for
I, Robot, no, there aren't any plans to convert
it, and I don't think it will ever make it to the
Amiga due to its age. As for a decent sleuth
game, try CRL's Herewith Be The Clues.

Once again, space has ended our run of
news, views and what have you, but I'll be
back next month so if you have any queries,
criticisms or whatever, make sure that you
drop me a line to:

**Steve Merrett
Letter Desk
Amiga Action
Interactive Publishing
Europa House
Adlington Park
Macclesfield SK10 4NP**

Stunt Car Plea.

I recently purchased what I believe to be the finest program available on the Amiga. I am talking about the excellent Stunt Car Racer, written by that wizard driving game programmer, Geoff Crammond (remember Revs on the BBC?). My problem lies in the fact that I have managed to get to the top of the division in the Superleague, hence finishing the game. However, my thirst for the game has still not been quenched, so could you tell me if there are any extra tracks available for the game and, if not, maybe we should put some pressure on the responsible to release some.

Binesh Lad, Exeter.

AA: At present, there are no plans to add any tracks to Stunt Car, but, hopefully, if enough people hassle them, perhaps Microprose will change their minds - we certainly hope so!

Hype Gripe.

I am writing to you on the subject of over-hyped games and the way in which good arcade games are converted to the Amiga. I'm talking about games such as Robocop, which was superb in the arcade, but on the Amiga it failed in the sound, graphics and, most importantly, gameplay aspects. I admit that I played it through to the end, but it took me less than an hour. I'm glad you didn't give this game a good review, because it didn't deserve it. It's not Ocean's fault, don't get me wrong, they can program games that do use the Amiga's capabilities - for instance, Batman, Operation Thunderbolt, Beach Volley and others. Another game which is very bad in terms of playability is Powerdrift (were the other mags paid to give it a good review?). The graphics were good, but the animation was worse than Outrun's! Beat that. And how about Space Ace? Perfect animation, graphics and sound, but it's another game you can finish in a couple of hours.

I hear that Virgin Games are converting Golden Axe, let's just hope that they convert it as well as they did Silkworm. I also hope that Elite's Ghosts'n'Goblins is as good as they boast. It would be a shame to see such good games go to the wrong programming team. I hope you print this letter, as I would like it to be a word of warning to other readers about not seeing a game

before they buy it. Anyway, keep up the good work, but where's the binders? Oh, one more point: can you ask Electric Dreams to convert a nice overscan version of Supersprint?

William Mortimore, Blackheath.

AA: I agree with your points on the over-hyping of games, but a lot of the time it isn't the soft co's fault. A lot of the coin-ops out now aren't always decent conversion material as they rely more on graphics and sound rather than playability - thus, the conversions tend to look weak when the computer can't handle the graphics AND the gameplay. A lot of diehard arcade-goers expect pixel-perfect versions of their fave games, and this often isn't possible, but the development teams can make decent compromises - Strider, Ghouls'n'Ghosts and R-Type are good examples of this. As for the forthcoming titles you mentioned, only time will tell. Golden Axe is being converted by Probe and Kevin Bulmer, and Ghosts'n'Goblins looks very close to the coin-op, but as usual it will be worth waiting for the AA reviews before deciding - remember, never buy a game unless you have either seen a review you feel you may agree with, or unless you can have a go first. Finally, don't hold your breath for a conversion of Supersprint, it's unlikely it'll get converted. Console yourself with Gremlin's excellent Supercars instead.

Why Review Bad Games?

As a newcomer to the Amiga world and your mag, I have noticed that the percentages you give for games rarely go above 80%. Is this because you are hard markers or because the games you review aren't that good? Secondly, in AA5 you reviewed three games: Blue Angel '69, Hellraider, and Galaxy Force. The first two got 40% and Galaxy Force got 36%. Do you really need to review games that are this bad, when there must be far better games around? Finally, do you know when Monaco G.P. will be available?

Chris Griffith, Surrey.

AA: Yes, we are hard markers, and the reason we review bad games and not just good ones is that I imagine you would have been extremely annoyed if you had bought Galaxy Force and no one bothered reviewing it. Also, if we were to review just good games, it would be a waste of time having a scoring system, as anything we review would simply score well. Finally, we have no news on Monaco G.P.

OK, What Is A MegaDrive?

During a lesson at school recently, myself and a few mates were talking about computers. Obviously, I was bragging about my beloved Amiga, and they were sitting in front of me going green with envy and drooling on the carpet. That is until one bright spark suddenly said: 'The Amiga is crap compared to the Sega MegaDrive!' 'What the hell is a MegaDrive?', I asked. Apparently, it has got arcade-quality graphics, a decent sound chip and loads of megabytes - and all for a minute two hundred quid. I couldn't really argue with him as I didn't know what I was up against - so I thought I'd write to you for the low-down.

Surely it is too good to be true. I knew that one day a machine would come along that was better than the Amiga, but I didn't realise it would be so soon.

D.A. Smith, Cornwall.

AA: Well, the MegaDrive is an excellent machine, but it isn't actually available yet. A lot of machines have arrived in the country, but as of yet none of them from the official distributor, Virgin/Mastertronic. Regarding consoles, they are OK if you only want to play games. They don't have decent adventures or RPGs, but they do have accurate coin-op conversions - but, then again, so does the Amiga. Also, the games sell for around thirty quid, and tend to have shorter lasting appeal. Next time your mate starts, just tell him that!

A Konix Query (Amongst Others!).

I have recently updated my trusty old 64 for an Amiga, but know little about the world of Amigas. I have bought some mags to see if I can learn anything, but I still have questions I would like you to answer.

1. Can you get Supersprint for the Amiga?
2. Can you get the Konix Console? If so, is it any good?
3. Do you need a reset switch for any pokes on the Amiga?

Toby Welch, Welwyn.

AA: No, you can't get Supersprint for the Amiga (see the letter above). Secondly, the Konix console is very overdue, but is expected for release 'soon'! Finally, no, you just enter the pokes into basic - no resetting required. Hope that helps.

DOMARK £19.95

KLAX

The time delay between a coin-op's release and the subsequent conversion to the home micros is getting smaller all the time - but Klax holds the all-time record, as the conversions were developed alongside the arcade machine! Designed by Atari games in the States, Klax sets the player the seemingly simple task of piling up groups of coloured tiles as they are carried down towards you by a large, five-lane conveyor belt. The basic idea of the game is to stack as many piles of similarly-coloured flip-flopping tiles as possible, but your task is made harder as the tiles' descent starts to speed up. The main play area is divided into two sections: the main part of the screen is taken up by the enormous conveyor belt, with the tiles flipping over and over and making a strange 'klacking' noise (hence the game's title) as they get nearer. The other part of the screen shows the small square that you collect the tiles with, and a 5X5 grid below where you deposit the piles of coloured tiles. Your collection block travels horizontally across the five lanes at the conveyor belt's end, and must be positioned under each block as it is about to drop off the edge. Up to five tiles can be

held at any one time, and dropping them is achieved by pressing the firebutton when you are over the pile you wish to add to. However, each pile can only hold five tiles, and trying to add to it will result in a loud belching noise to indicate that that particular lane is full, and a lot of panic. In addition, if during the ensuing chaos, your block misses three or more (depending on the difficulty level) of the tiles and they fall over the edge, then one of your three credits will be lost. Whenever three or more tiles of the same colour are stacked, you have created a 'Klax', and the tiles will miraculously disappear. However, as you get further into the game the Klaxes will start to involve placing tiles in diagonal patterns and horizontally, and this is when things start to get really hard. Luckily, though, not everything is stacked against you, and glowing chameleonlike tiles often drift down the screen and act neutrally, allowing you to complete a Klax without the necessary colour. Likewise, if things are getting a little too close for comfort, tiles can be 'flipped' back up the screen with a quick push up of the joystick. The number of Klaxes needed per level is determined at the start of the game and is dependent on the difficulty level. Once you have created the required amount, you will be given a bonus and access to the next stage.

ALEX

Not since I played Tetris has a game held such appeal. I started to play Klax and found myself addicted to it, and just had to have another go... and another... The attractive graphics hide an extremely playable game that will have even the least excitable of people pulling their hair out, this sheer playability is what makes Klax brilliant. If you buy a game this month, this has got to be it!

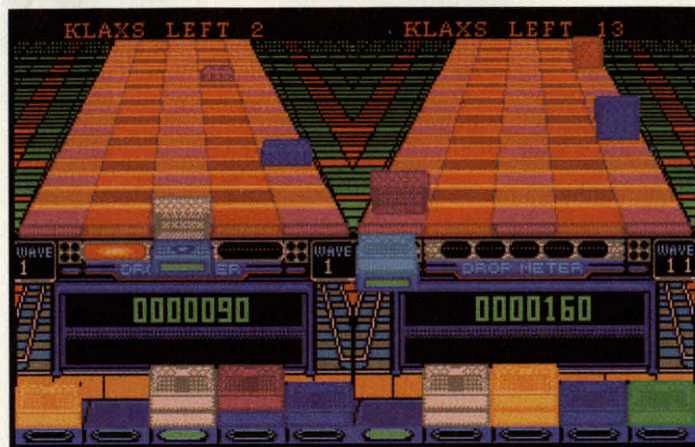
SOUND

Some very impressive speech and music, and the in-game effects are better than I thought they would be, with the tiles actually screaming as they fall!

68%



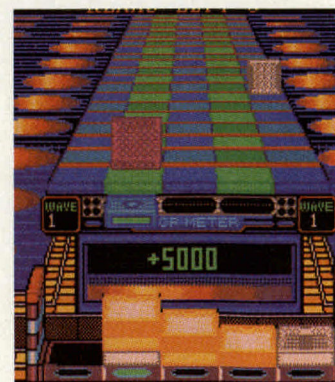
At the start of the game you are given the option to select your difficulty level. Beginners are advised to take the easy route of the first stage, but there are better bonuses and more drops allowed for the real Klax pro.



One or two players can play Klax but, instead of taking turns, the screen is split into two, and a second conveyor belt is added for double the fun!

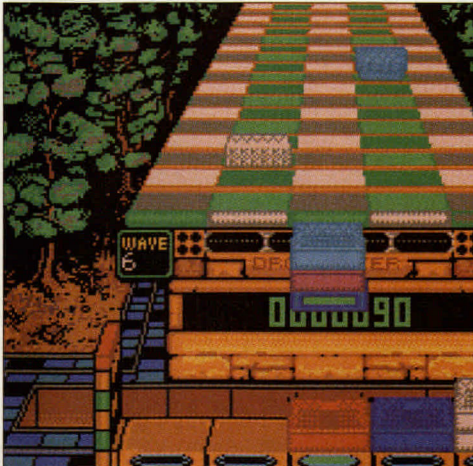


As you build up your columns of similarly-coloured tiles, the one tile to keep an eye open for is the glowing 'wild' tile which can be used to finish off a Klax of any colour.



Klaxes can be made up either vertically, horizontally, or even diagonally, with extra points being given for the harder patterns. In addition, it is possible to kill two birds with one stone and link two Klaxes with one centre piece

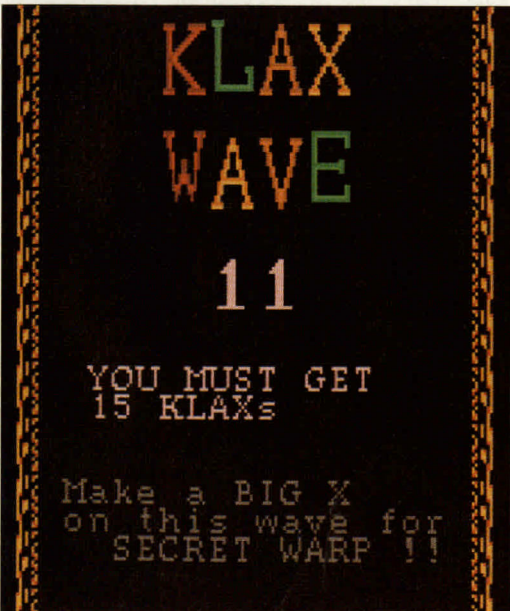
■ (Below) Whilst not essential to the game, your progress is shown as the backdrops for each level change. You start off in what seems to be a garish metallic course, and then progress through a jungle and into space.



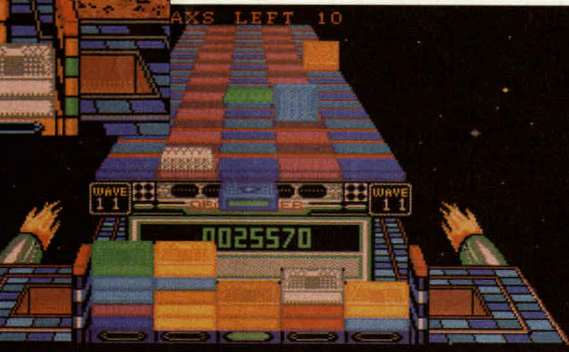
■ (Right) If you are already holding five tiles, to stop others from falling off the conveyor belt, they can be 'flipped' back up using the joystick - but don't get too excited, it doesn't take long for them to make their way down again.



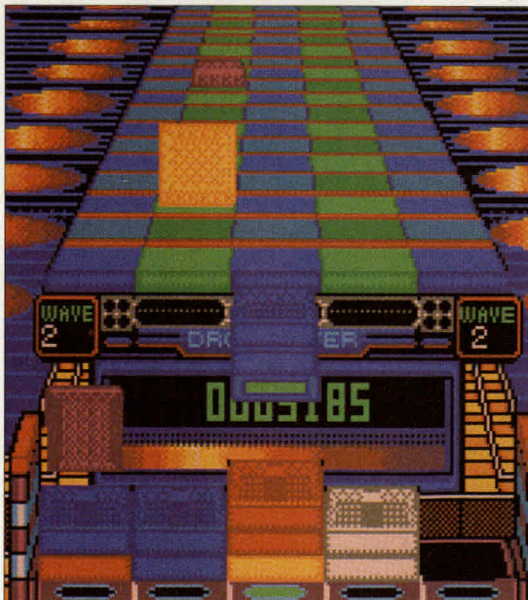
■ (Below) An expert Klax player can boost his points and skip levels by completing extremely difficult tasks - creating a large cross, for instance - and these tasks are hinted at before each level begins.



■ (Above) Your collector block can hold up to five tiles at once, and works on the principle of 'first in, last out', which means that you may end up holding on to some tiles for ages.



■ (Left) Once you have completed the number of Klaxes set, you are given a bonus for every square that doesn't contain a tile, going on to the next stage.



■ (Above) As things start hotting up, the tiles start rolling towards you much faster. Depending on which difficulty level you are playing on, up to five tiles can be dropped, but any more than that and it's 'game over'.

AMIGA ACTION

OVERALL RATING

82%

STEVE

Simple ideas are often the best when it comes to creating playable games and E-Motion and Pipemania prove this, but Klax is probably the very best example. From the moment I started playing I was hooked, and instead of going back to it later for another crack, I kept on playing it until I beat it. Everything about the game is brilliant, and it is extremely close to the original Atari coin-op., making this an excellent conversion but a superb game in its own right.

DOUG

Klax reminds you what it's like to enjoy a game. Although very simple in its idea, Klax is really addictive, and it had me hooked from the moment I picked up the joystick. Klax is very similar to the Russian game Tetris, but it would not be fair to say it is a clone, for once you've played the game you notice the differences. Klax will keep you occupied for ages, and is definitely worth buying.

GRAPHICS

Although they are simple, Klax's graphics are more than adequate and, in the process, very pretty. The changes of backdrop are neat, too.

72%

ACTIVISION £19.95

NINJA SPIRIT

Coin-op manufacturers, Irem, are better known for their two R-Type shoot'em-ups. However, in the past, they have also been responsible for the cutesy Mr. Heli and the scrolling martial arts romp, Ninja Spirits - the subject for this latest Activision conversion. The story behind the game has become a little garbled in the translation from Japanese, but it revolves around the plight of a noble wolf who has been put under a curse by an evil warlock. Having angered the evil magician, he has transformed you into a young human, and to get your wolvine features back, you must make your way through seven dangerous stages for a final confrontation. So, armed with a sword, shurikans, dynamite and a razor-sling, you must make your way through the scrolling stages, killing everything and everyone that gets in the way. As you are making your way through the treacherous stages, enemy ninjas will appear in the trees and, if killed, release useful icons which endows your character with magical powers, ranging from a fiery shield to a useful clone - the Ninja Spirit of the title. In addition, enhancements for each of your four weapons can

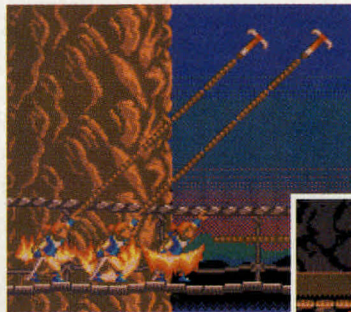
be collected, and unlike most games of this ilk, these aren't lost when you lose a life. The stages are broken up into horizontal and vertically-scrolling areas, and guarding the end of each level is one of the warlord's many accomplices. After a brief pause, these massive guardians

will rise up and start to attack you, and it is up to you to hit them with everything you have got before they deplete your energy and lives. This process must also be repeated when you eventually reach the warlord who caused the whole problem, but on a much larger scale.

DOUG

Not a bad game, but certainly lacking in something. I found Ninja Spirit initially playable but there just wasn't enough to keep me going and the game soon became very dull. The choice of weapons is a good idea, and being able to boost the powers of each one in some way or another is appealing. Ninja Spirit is an average game, but not one I would recommend.

(Below) Your four weapons are all accessible via the spacebar, and range from simple throwing stars to a Bionic Commando-style claw that can be swung around your head. These weapons can all be upgraded by collecting certain icons, and, thankfully, the enhancements aren't lost when you lose a life.



■ Your loyal ninja spirits prove extremely useful when it comes to back-up as they mirror every move you make with a time-lapse of roughly ten seconds - essential when dealing with the tree-based enemy.



■ (Above) The end-of-level guardians are all larger variations of the ninjas that attack you and, amongst others, you will find yourself facing men strapped on to kites and gigantic Shinobi-style ninjas. The method for dealing with them, though, remains the same - just hit them as many times as possible!

GRAPHICS

Very close to those of the coin-op, but they seem a little dull and would have benefited from a bit of brightening up.

66%

SOUND

A pleasant ditty plays at the end of each stage, and there are plenty of meaty effects within the game to keep even the most blood-thirsty ninja happy. Overall, though, the game does sound a bit like a 64 version.

56%

OVERALL RATING

58%

STEVE

I have played the Ninja Spirits coin-op on a number of occasions and come away relatively unimpressed every time. Its simple 'cut'n'run' gameplay relies more on luck and speed than on skill, and everything in the game depends on how quickly you can bash the firebutton. Thus, although this conversion is a fairly accurate one, it suffers from all the same faults that made its arcade parent less than thrilling. In addition, compared to other Amiga conversions, the graphics seem dull and uninteresting; I felt that more colour should have been used. A good conversion of a poor coin-op.



■ (Above) Spiked bamboo pits prove hazardous on later levels, but thanks to your latest acquisition - glue-soled shoes - you can nip along the ceiling to avoid the majority of enemy assailants.



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DYNASTY WARS

SOUND

The in-game tune is extremely repetitive, and the sound effects aren't much better either.

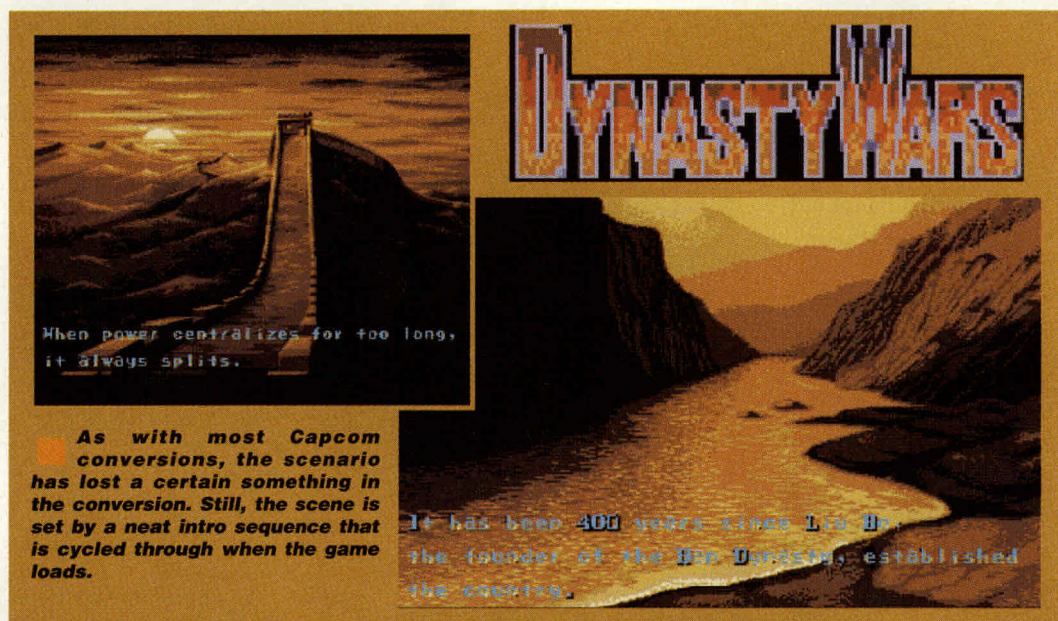
56%

All is not well in the war-torn China of 184AD. A band of eight vicious warlords have hacked their way through each of the country's massive dynasties, slaughtering all who oppose them and claiming the land for themselves. Any resistance was met swiftly by either the blood-thirsty generals themselves or their merciless band of bandits and warriors, and now even the mightiest of all the families, the Han dynasty, has fallen to the warlords. Now, having secured all of the important estates, the eight warlords have disbanded, leaving their warrior guards to patrol the lands, picking off any groups of resistance or even innocent people. Their wills gone, along with their possessions, the once-regal families are now under each general's tyrannical rule - but now there is a glimmer of hope as a plan forms. Four mighty warriors, each with his own skills in combat and mystical powers, have banded together to form an allegiance. It is hoped that by using all their stealth and cunning, a small party of one or two of the heroes will be able to sneak into each of the general's lairs and attempt an assassination - a small hope, but the only one they've got... So goes the very Japanese story behind U.S. Gold's newest Capcom conversion. Following the likes of the athletic Strider and the spooky Ghouls'n'Ghosts, Dynasty Wars is a one or two player

hack'n'slay game set over eight horizontally-scrolling levels. The game begins with a lengthy description of the scenario, telling of how 'you weren't born together, but you will die together(!)', and leads into the character selection screen. There are four characters

to choose from, each varying in their health and psychic abilities, and a good combination of the two should be chosen - with physical strength taking a slight priority over mental ability. And, once a warrior has been selected, the battle begins. Seated on the

back of your trusty steed, the basic aim of the game is to slaughter everyone and anything that gets in your way, and make your way to the general who lurks at the end of the stage. The enemy warriors are all ground-based, giving you a slight advantage, but out-number you heavily and are armed with



As with most Capcom conversions, the scenario has lost a certain something in the conversion. Still, the scene is set by a neat intro sequence that is cycled through when the game loads.

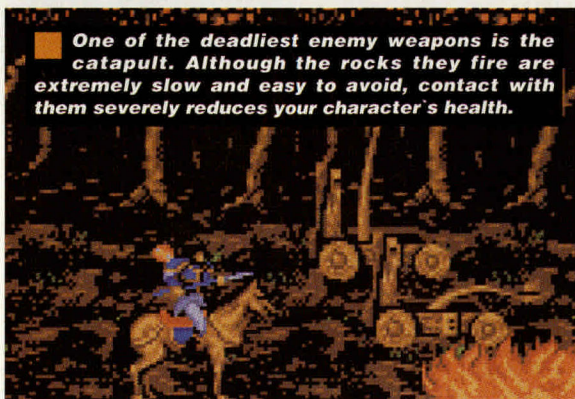
It has been 400 years since Liu Hsiang, the founder of the Han Dynasty, established the country.

ALEX

I can't see how Tiertex could have made a decent, playable arcade conversion if the original arcade version was pretty awful itself. The graphics and sound are first class, but both the lack of playability and lasting appeal all add up to a rather mediocre game. There is a challenge to be found, though, the trouble is it's dull, and once you have seen the first stage, you've seen almost everything. Overall, very pretty to look at but, sadly, the good points end there.



One of the deadliest enemy weapons is the catapult. Although the rocks they fire are extremely slow and easy to avoid, contact with them severely reduces your character's health.



(Left) All the relevant information about your character is displayed under the main play area. 1. The state of your physical and mental health. Every time you concede a hit, your energy bar is reduced until you are finally killed. However, when you die, no mental health is lost, allowing your powers to keep growing. 2. Warnings of all oncoming attacks are displayed here, and it proves particularly useful when warning you of the frequent rockfalls. 3. Lives Remaining - pretty obvious really! 4. This space is usually empty, but whenever a general appears, his state of health is displayed here.



(Right) The generals are aesthetically the same for each level, and the method for killing them is identical, too. An energy bar at the top of the screen informs you of his strength, and this is slowly depleted with every hit you land home, until the evil warlord eventually dies leaving 10,000 points in his wake.

GRAPHICS

Attractive, with nice, if a little repetitive sprites, and a good use of colour in the backdrops.

76%

swords, catapults and bows, all of which sap your strength if they hit you. Depending on which warrior you are controlling, your weapon will range from a large battle axe to a spear, and the strength of each swipe is determined by the length of time the firebutton is held down for. However, should your energy bar be fully depleted,



(Above) Your travels will take you across a number of landscapes, including forests and snowscapes - all of which are equally danger-filled.

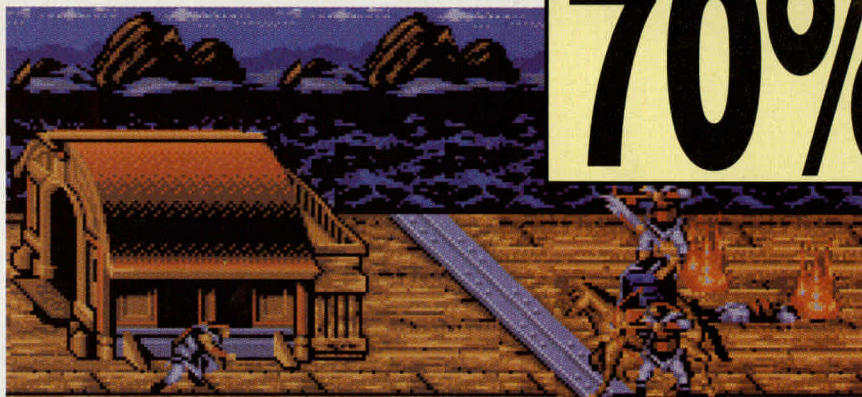
STEVE

The Dynasty Wars coin-op is pretty to look at, but repetitive to play, and that is reflected in this polished conversion. All of the impressive features of the coin-op - the neat attract mode and some nice sprites - are there, but there's no escaping that the gameplay gets extremely tedious. At first, I really enjoyed slashing my way through wave after wave of evil warriors, but by the fourth level the appeal had waned immensely. Programmers Tiertex have made a really good job of transferring a dull coin-op to the Amiga, but I'm afraid I can't really recommend it.

you will be knocked from your horse and one of your four lives will be lost. The final confrontation between you and each horse-riding general takes place at the end of each level, and involves

avoiding his charges and attacks from swarming minions whilst attempting to deplete his energy bar. Do this eight times, and you will have saved Japan from more senseless slaughter.

(Below) The power of each of your sword or axe swipes is determined by the length of time the firebutton is held down. Smaller hits have a very small range and hardly ever hit home, so it is worth preparing larger swipes that clear two or three of the enemy at once.



DOUG

Hmmm, I must confess that I quite like Dynasty Wars. So the gameplay isn't that exciting, but it does prove challenging and it will take a while to reach the eighth general. The problem with it is the lack of variety. Each level features the same action against different levels, and even the generals are identical - but this true of the coin-op, so fans of the original machine should be pleased. A playable game, but by no means a classic.

OVERALL RATING

70%



SHANG FEI
P.P.
M.P.



SHAO YUN
P.P.
M.P.



LIU BEI
P.P.
M.P.



KUAN YU
P.P.
M.P.



SHAO YUN
P.P.
M.P.

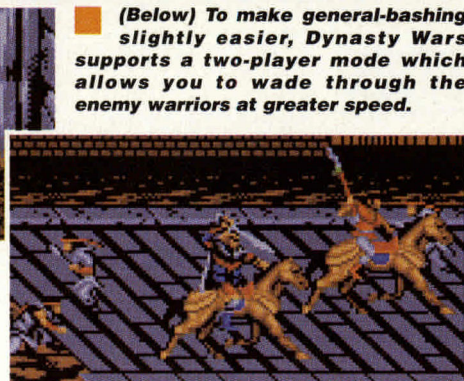


KUAN YU
P.P.
M.P.

At the start of the game, you are given information on each of the four characters. On the whole, it is wiser to opt for the physically strong characters, as mental energy can be collected along the way, but all start the game reasonably strong.



(Above) Another big worry are the frequent rockfalls and avalanches. These kill you almost instantly on contact, and great timing and pixel-perfect positioning are needed to avoid the falling or rolling obstacles.

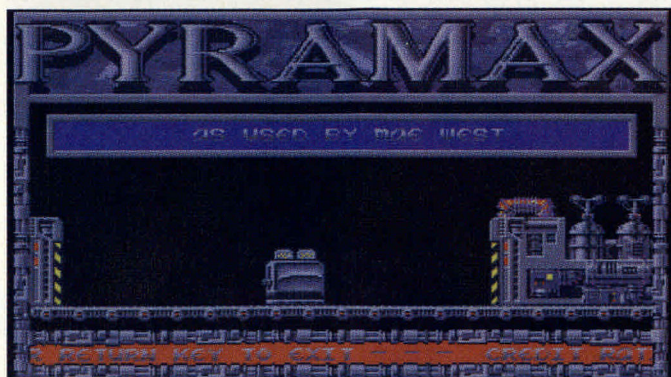


(Below) To make general-bashing slightly easier, Dynasty Wars supports a two-player mode which allows you to wade through the enemy warriors at greater speed.

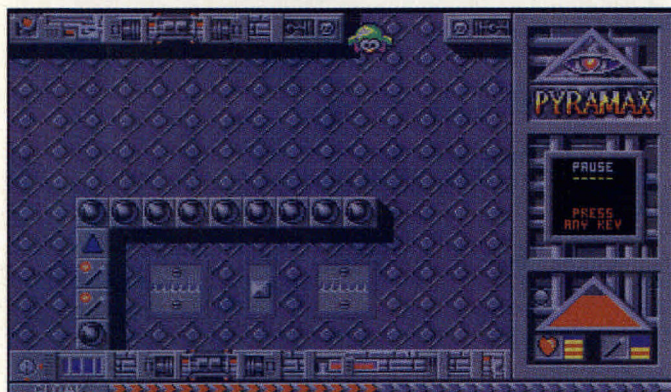


(Above) Locked treasure chests and vases hold vital supplies of strength and mental energy boosters, and should be collected before they mysteriously vanish. If the worst come to the worst and you are over-powered, you will be dismantled and killed, only to reappear seconds later as good as new.

■ (Below) In similar style to the *Generation Game*, the prizes you have collected during your previous game come rolling along a conveyor belt. Items such as teletext TVs and microwaves - and the only thing that pops into my mind is the size of the pockets Max must have to carry that lot!



■ At the side of the screen a map details the current room that you are standing in. It also lets you look at the rooms that have had their touchstones activated. At the bottom of the screen, your cloak level (which offers limited invulnerability) is shown, as well as your power level.



ARC £19.95

PYRAMAX

You push your way through the forest of Xandor, in search of the Pyramid of Thaal. Legend has it that, inside, the Thaalians built great machines that would serve them. As the centuries past, the intelligent race depended more and more on their robo-slaves.

The droids were assigned to creating even more machines, but the Thaalians forgot one thing - the robots directives were 'To serve the creator', and being

built by other robo-slaves, they did just that. They saw the carbon-units as a hindrance and, before long, they had taken over. As a tribute to the Thaalian creators, the 8.2 series droids built a symbol of remembrance - a six-story pyramid with the Thaalian crystal at the apex.

You are Max Danger, and your ambition is to find that crystal. The six levels must be conquered before you can reach

STEVE

On first sight, Pyramax looks like a Gauntlet clone. However, whereas Gauntlet was a fast'n'furious game set over hundreds of levels, Pyramax is a slow trundle through several different coloured stages. Graphically, the game is quite smart, with good use of bas-relief, but the gameplay is slow and monotonous and also suffers from each level having an over-long task. If things could be speeded up and the enemy weren't quite so persistent, Pyramax would be quite nice, but they aren't, they are, and so it isn't.



■ (Above) The enemy come in all shapes and sizes: to begin with, Bug-eyes give you hassle, but they are easily dealt with. Later on though, indestructible dice and sacred frogs home in on you, posing a very nasty threat.



■ (Right) Different styles of gameplay have also been included on different levels and rooms. For instance, in each corner of level two, you can play sub-games of Frogger, Break-out and Space Invaders!

OVERALL RATING

64%

■ (Left) In each room on each level, there is a Touchstone. Each one must be activated before you can progress to the next level. This is done by simply walking up to it and touching it. The stone will then enlarge and the corresponding square on the map will turn grey.

ALEX

At first, you may think that Pyramax is a pretty dire game, but I think these thoughts are misleading. The game proves very addictive once you have got over the initial frustration of being frequently killed, and the addition of the sub-games can only make it better. On the whole, if you can put up with the infuriating beginning, I think you'll be onto a little gem.

the top. As you go along, you are also hoping to find bonus prizes that you will be able to retrieve. All is not that simple, though. You can't just stroll up a couple of staircases before snatching the gem and walking back out again.

The Pyramid is littered with Robo-slaves which, every time they shoot or collide with you, knock off some of your energy. Once your energy has been totally depleted, you'll swirl into the floor and one of your three lives will be lost. Luckily, you can replenish your energy or gain extra lives from any of the numerous power icons lying around.

GRAPHICS

Although the colours are mostly greys, the end product is very effective. The flick screen scrolling works well, and thankfully, it makes the game a little easier!

64%

SOUND

Sadly, the in-game sound effects need a lot to be desired, but the decent, if slightly irritating, tune makes up for it.

59%

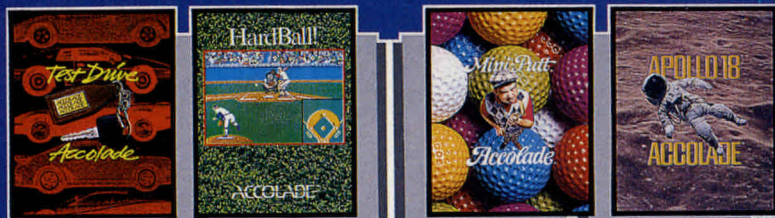
On every screen is a touchstone. These need to be touched in order to fill the Pyramax map in the right-hand side of the screen. Levels five and six also metamorphose, so every time you re-enter one of the two levels the map layout will be different.

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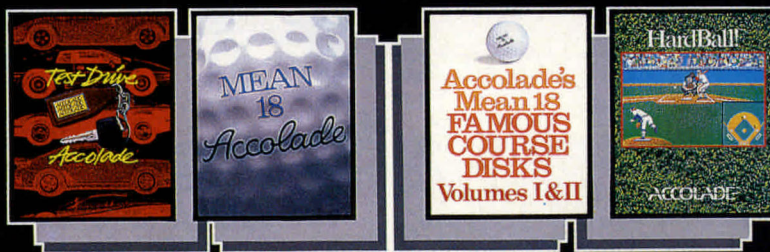
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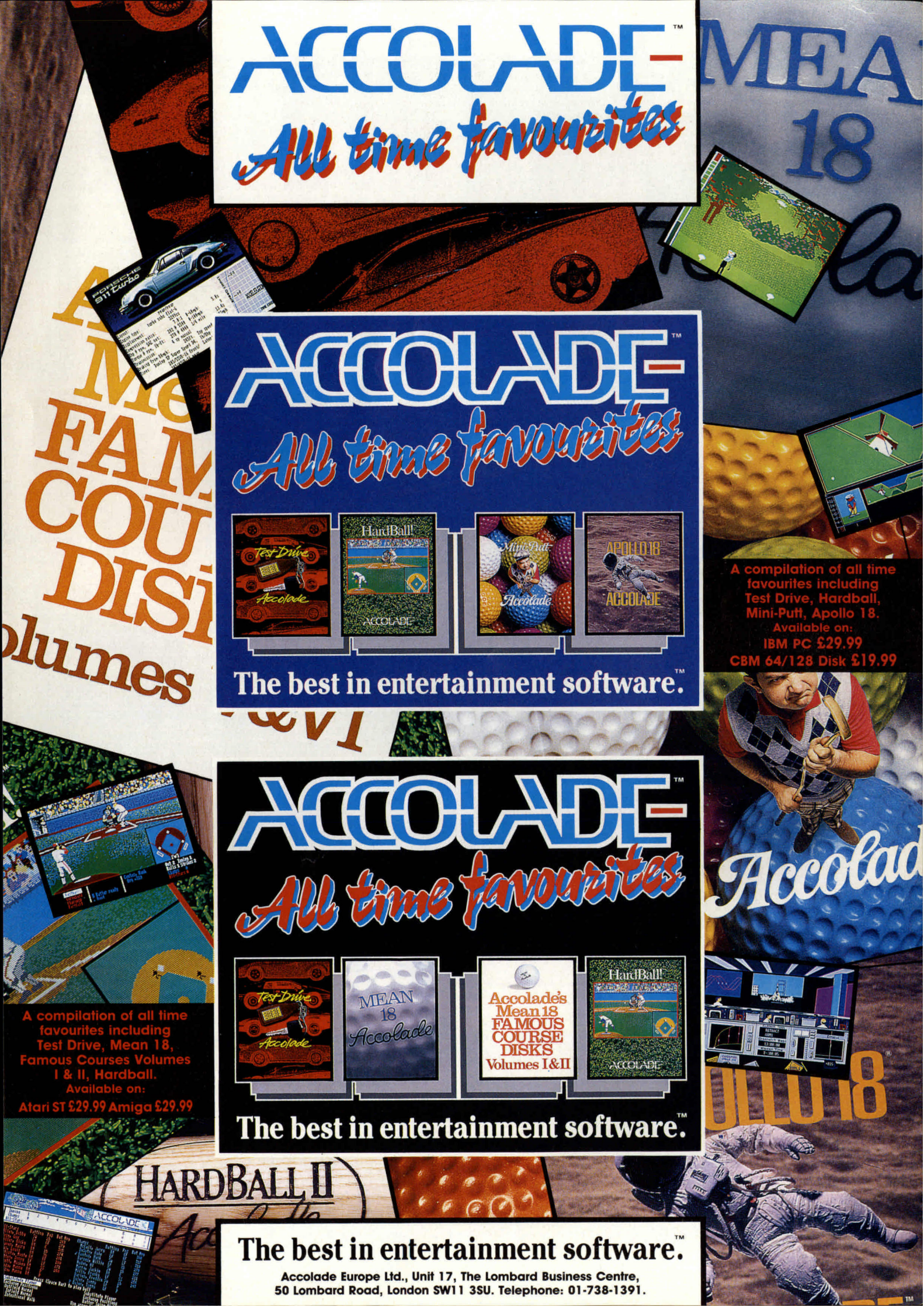
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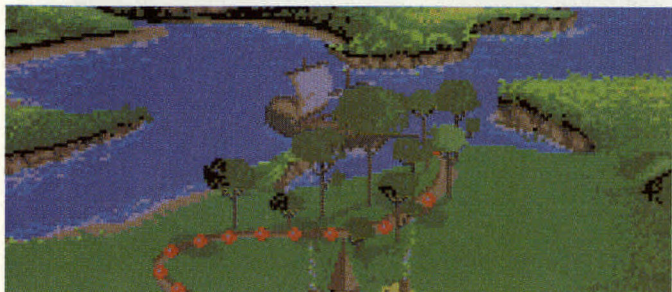


OVERALL RATING

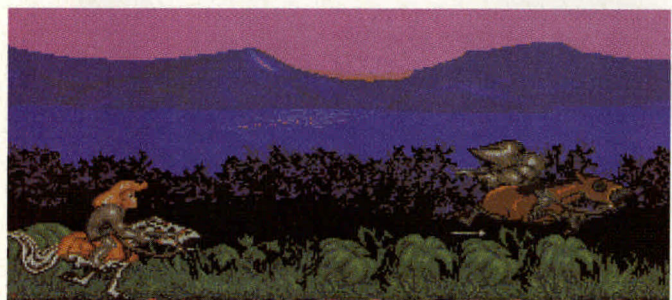
57%



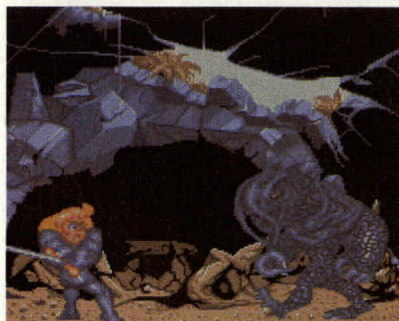
Most of the levels are comprised of scrolling hack 'n' slay action. As you make your way to the right-hand side of the screen, enemy warriors attack you from both sides - they even take pot-shots from the trees!



Your progress is shown by a stream of red dots edging their way along the paths and across treacherous seas but there's not much sea between here and Austria. Thick forests and long journeys by horse will have to be endured before your quest is complete.

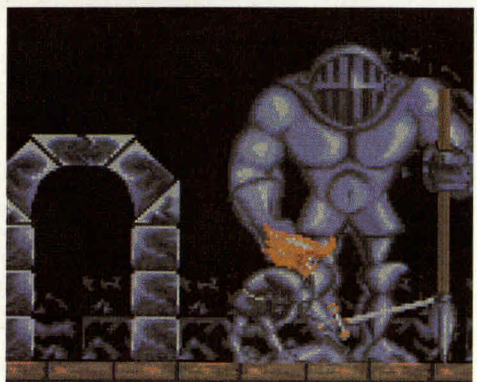


After crossing the deep blue sea, you arrive with your feet firmly on French soil. Time is not on your side, so you must mount your horse and gallop off towards your objective - King Richard. Along the way, you must fend off other knights and jump deadly obstacles in the road.



At the end of each stage, a bonus level offers you the chance to gain an extra life. Set inside a gloomy cave, a large monster comes stumbling out of the shadows towards you. Think fast and make sure every swipe counts, because he will not give up until he dies or has eaten you for his supper!

Level five is an arcade adventure. Set inside the Austrian castle where King Richard is being held, you must explore the network of stairs, tunnels and passages, not knowing what is going to be lurking behind the door.



OCEAN £19.95

IVANHOE

STEVE

The impressive cartoon-quality graphics of *Ivanhoe* only serve in masking the repetitive nature of the gameplay. The action consists of fending off your enemy's advances by swinging your sword at them over and over again, and, although this is broken up by some mildly interesting variations (a horse-riding section and small arcade/adventure), I found myself getting more and more frustrated by the limited gameplay. A pity, as the Amiga hasn't seen a decent hack'n'slay game for ages.

ALEX

If games were judged solely on graphics and sound, *Ivanhoe* would be one of the best, if not the best game of its kind. However, the game is amazingly annoying and lacking in playability. It is a game of luck, rather than skill, and providing you can swing your sword quick enough, it should be fairly easy to slowly progress. I also found that when you died, it placed you far behind where you had reached. I think that if more attention had been paid on the gameplay, we would have a classic, but as it is, I find it difficult to recommend.

GRAPHICS

Brilliant, colourful sprites and backdrops, with a large variation of both enemies and landscapes. Sadly, the animation is not up to scratch, and therefore lowers the appeal of the otherwise superb graphics.

83%

SOUND

The music that plays both in the game and whilst loading is good and, thankfully, different tunes accompany different levels. The hack 'n' slay sounds are good, although they are not original.

65%



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What's a Toyotte? I hear you ask. Well, for those of you out there who haven't had the misfortune of encountering one of these cute little creatures before, this here game will be a pleasant surprise. The Toyottes are a race of rat-like people, who are ruled by the supreme King (who's heir to the throne is a few gallons short of a pint). Unfortunately, his son, being the mischievous little devil that he is, has managed to get into the labyrinth the is situated below the King's palace, and you, Cyprian, being the valued member of the community that you are, have ben directed by the king to go down into the labyrinth and find him, and if you don't do as the King says you will have to face the horrific and grotesque Tweezer torture.

The going's not going to be easy though, due to the countless numbers of aggressive monsters that dwell within the confines of the labyrinth. These monsters are known as the pursuers, and they charge into battle as soon as they set their eyes on you. However, not all the creatures within the labyrinth will be dangerous. While roaming the maze in search of Barnaby you might be lucky enough to bump into a cheesy monster. These animals leave a trail of cheese behind them, which will restore vital energy when eaten.

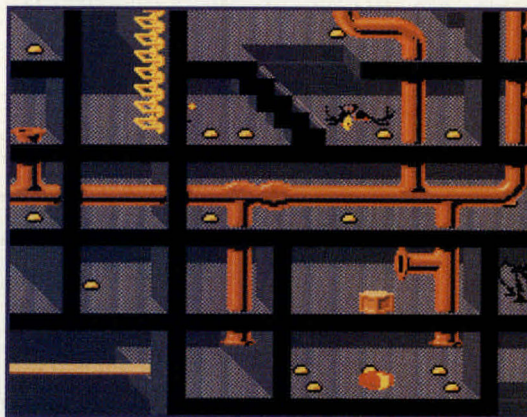
A selection of objects can

also be found within the maze like dungeon, and these can be collected and traded with the various guardians that you will

meet in your search. But be quick! The fate of Barnaby and the Toyotte race lies in your hands.

DOUG

The Toyottes is a really fun looking game, but unfortunately, the graphics are the best thing about it. The basic idea is pretty good, and fighting the various monsters is quite fun, but once you've seen most of the screens and baddies the game loses its addictiveness and appeal. As far as platform games go, Toyottes isn't that great and not really something I can recommend.



■ Cheese is your main source of energy, and there will never be enough to eat. Cheesey monsters are a good source of this vital substance, so make sure you don't kill them by accident.



■ A huge monster stands in front of you. Hopefully, you'll have the right object and then you'll be able to continue your quest for Barnaby.

GRAPHICS

Quite humorous graphics that draw you into the game. An average use of colour, but the backdrops are pretty bland. Couple this with lots going on, and you get a very confusing play area.

65%

SOUND

Some good music, with a good variety of sound effects during the game. Overall, they add to the humour of the graphics quite well.

63%

OVERALL RATING

53%

■ Wriggling into the pipe, you head off hoping to find an important object. Unfortunately, the only thing you come across is a rather viscous pipe cleaner.

■ Pursuers aren't the nicest people around and when you happen to bump into one you'll be in for one heck of a fight - so get your dukes up and give him the old one-two.

■ There are a large number of different objects to be found within the game, and these will be needed to enable you to pass the various guardians.

STEVE

The Toyottes looks extremely confusing when you first play it, as there is so much going on. However, once you have actually sussed out what is going on, although the task is mildly interesting, the game is presented in such a confusing way that it is difficult to determine how well you are actually doing. The game's large play area proves fun to explore for a while, but I can't see myself going back to this much.

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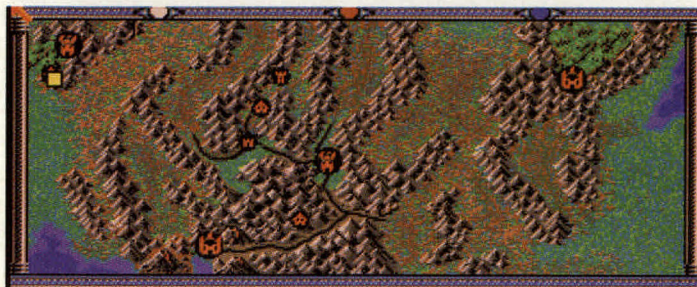
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SIR WHITEY	STATUS OKAY
MALE 23 YEARS	HIT POINTS 17/17
LAWFUL GOOD	HUMAN
KNIGHT OF THE CROWN	
LEVEL 1	EXPERIENCE 3622
STR 18 (25)	STEEL 27
INT 14	
WIS 16	
DEX 17	
CON 12	
CHA 16	
ARMOR CLASS 7	ENCUMBRANCE 587
THACO 19	MOVEMENT 12
DAMAGE 1D2+3	
ITEMS TRADE DROP EXIT	

At most points during the game you can view your character's stats and items. Careful note of your character's condition will have to be kept if he's to survive very long.



There's quite a bit of land to explore, and even larger dungeon complexes within the various castles shown on the map, and most of them will have to be entered at some point throughout the game.



Stepping outside of the outpost, you bump into a group of Draconians raiding a village. Drawing your swords you run into battle and, hopefully, your first victory.

No arcade sequences in this game. Combat is very strategic in *Champions Of Krynn*, and it works very well indeed. Attacking, moving and casting spells are all handled very well.



U.S.GOLD £19.95

CHAMPIONS OF KRYNN

SSI have managed to bring out quite a few games under their TSR Dungeons And Dragons licence, and these games have been made to cater for almost everyone. *Heroes Of The Lance* was their first attempt and it tried to combine both arcade and strategy, and so did its sequel *Dragons Of Flame*; unfortunately the two games didn't seem to play too well. But in their later attempts such as *Hillsfar*, SSI seemed to have learnt by their mistakes and followed the usual gameplay of RPG with arcade sequences not playing such a prominent part, although they were still there. In *Champions Of Krynn* there are no arcade sequences to speak of, and the game is totally strategy/RPG. Characters are made in the same way as with the previous games in the series. You are asked what race, sex, alignment (not evil) and class you wish your character to be, and then a group of statistics on your character are randomly generated to see what his strong and weak points are. The usual four classes are available (fighter, mage, thief and cleric), as well as an extra two (knight and ranger). A party of six people can be assembled, and it's best to get a varied selection of professions if your party is to last very long. At least one of each spell caster will be needed, for both defensive and offensive reasons. For once, the presence of gods has been a bit more important, and clerics (being religious people) will have to have selected a god from which they will gain their divine powers; something which seemed to have been left out of the previous games. Combat sequences have been changed from the usual arcade sequences, and this will make use of the statistics that all too often get forgotten about almost immediately after you've generated them. The combat area is viewed from above, along with each person involved in the battle and the various obstructions such as trees and

bushes. Depending on your stats, you will be allowed a certain amount of movement points, in which you can move your character around and attack your opponents. However, once you have made some sort of attack, be it magical or melee, your attack round will then be over. The battle is won by either all of the members of one of the sides being dead, or by one of the sides retreating. In either of these cases experience points will be awarded to all surviving characters, and a chance to claim your fair share of gold and equipment from the now lifeless bodies. The selection of missions given to you will be both taxing and dangerous, but as the game goes on, both you and your characters will become more experienced, and hopefully you become the saviours of Krynn.

SOUND

Apart from the tune on the loading intro there's not much else to listen to. However, there are a few sound effects in the game and this suffices for a game such as this.

58%

STEVE

I didn't like *Heroes Of The Lance* much, but I found *Champions Of Krynn* very enjoyable to play. The storyline is very good and the missions are presented well. Combat sequences work very well, and if you become a bit bored with them, instead of controlling your characters manually you can put them into auto and let the computer do the work. *Champions Of Krynn* is a game worth getting.

AMIGA ACTION

OVERALL RATING

86%

DOUG

SSI's previous attempts at TSR Dungeons And Dragons RPG games haven't been bad, but I always felt they lacked something. However, Champions Of Krynn seems to have learnt from its previous mistakes and come up with a top class RPG game. The game follows the Proper D&D rules closer than the previous ones, and even spending time to learn your spells has been included. For a first-time computer user who has played the original RPG game, this is about as close as you're going to get.

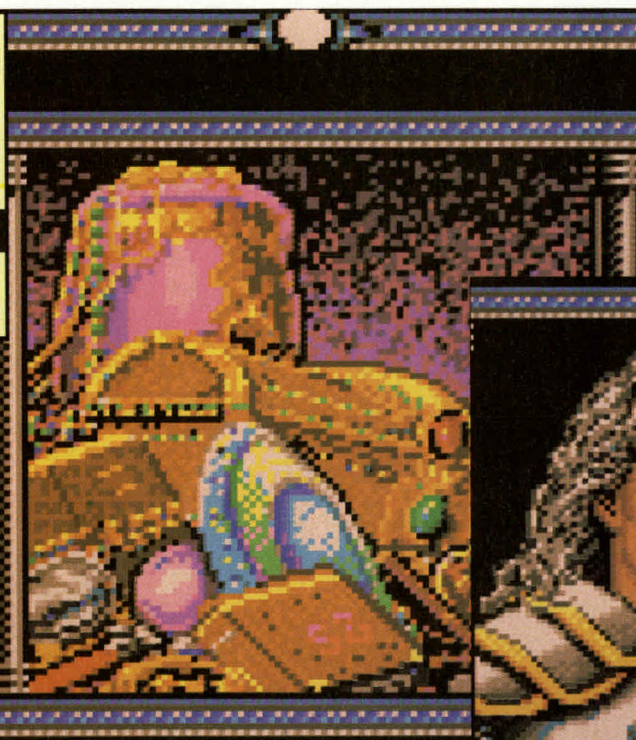
GRAPHICS

Very well drawn and animated pictures to depict the various locations and monsters. The main map and dungeons are quite good as well and show everything very clearly.

77%

ANDY

Thankfully, Champions Of Krynn dispenses with the tedious arcade sections of Heroes Of The Lance and concentrates on what SSI are best at - pure and involving RPG gameplay. From the moment I started playing I found myself engrossed in a massive world filled to the brim with long and interesting missions - and, surprisingly, the game doesn't get repetitive. A brilliant game, and one of the best in the RPG genre.



(Right) The commandant gives you your orders and sends you on your first mission, but is he as trustworthy as he looks?

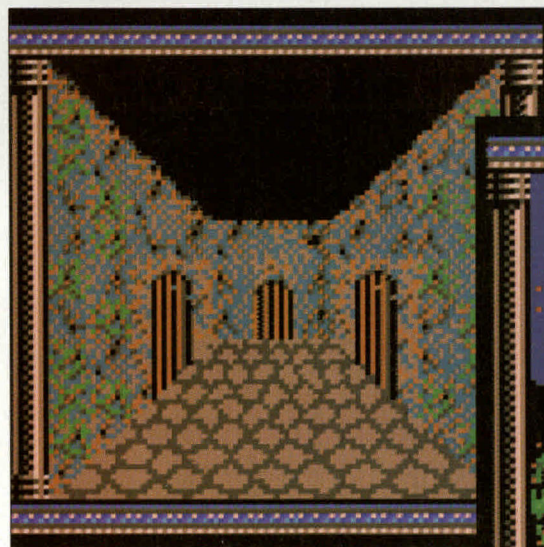


Once the fight is over it's time to get your reward. Searching through the various bodies you take what little treasure there is an head back to the outpost for supplies.

NAME	AC	HP
SIR WHITEN	-1	17
BUCKLAND MIKE	5	28
MOSS CHOPS MARK	3	14
DIDDY DAVE	4	16
MICHELLE	7	12
MALTESE TONY	9	13

07,15 N 14:09

(Above) Your party come up against an armour-clad warrior. Whether he's friend or foe is up to you to find out - he certainly doesn't look chummy!



(Above) After disposing of the guards at the entrance, you make your way through the maze of corridors in search of the group of men Sir Karl has sent you to find.

(Below) Inside the outpost you make your way to the inn and get shelter for the night. But while the fighters sleep the mages memorize their spells.



A wide variety of options allow you to tune the game to your own needs. As well as choosing the match length, you can also choose the nationality of the team you want to represent, each of which has a bar detailing its strengths and weaknesses.



OVERALL RATING
54%



Once you have decided who you want to take to victory, you must choose a team of eleven from the full twenty-two-player squad. Each player has four characteristics, and you must create a well-balanced team using them.



You begin the tournament in one of six groups, and must ensure that you qualify by getting to the top of the league. As you do this, any progress into the quarter and semi-finals is charted by this would-be TV Sports commentator.



(Above) The actual match can be played over anything from one to forty-five minutes aside, and practically every rule is catered for. A full complement of throw-ins, penalties and goal kicks are included - with the latter two viewed from a first-person perspective.

(Below) The game draws some of its ideas from past games, including Kick Off, the TV Sports series, and this fetching scoreboard is extremely similar to the one on Microdeal's soccer.



U.S. GOLD £19.95

ITALY 1990

The second game released this month to coincide with the forthcoming World Cup finals, is from Birmingham-based, U.S. Gold, whom older gamers may remember scored a bit of an own goal a few years back with the release of 'World Cup Carnival', a well packaged re-release of an ageing Artic title. However, claiming to have learned from their big mistake, the programming team behind Strider and Dynasty Wars, Tiertex, have been commissioned the task of bringing all of the thrills of the World Cup to the Amiga, and

have opted to combine arcade and managerial sections within the gameplay.

Having made your team selection and chosen the match duration, you are given a further selection of options from which a team and tactics must be chosen. Each player has four key characteristics - aggressiveness, speed, strength, and skill - and your team should make balanced use of these, ensuring that players that are weak in one department have a stronger or faster player nearby to back them up. The actual matches are viewed from overhead with your

SOUND

A nice tune accompanies the team and tactic selection screens. The ditty that plays after every goal, however, only serves to annoy.

51%

GRAPHICS

Whilst the TV commentator looks like he has walked off the set of a TV Sports game, the rest of the graphics are decidedly weak.

63%

players running up and down a vertically-scrolling pitch. Most of the game's rules are adhered to, including fouls and corners, and an invisible referee makes sure that play runs smoothly. The joystick is used to control the player nearest the ball, and the directional controls allow him to run in one of eight directions,

whilst the firebutton kicks the ball. You begin the tournament in one of six 'groups', and must make sure that you are in the top two of that group to make it to the next round. After that, you will enter quarter and semi-finals, before ultimately making your way to the cup final.

STEVE

I remember the farce surrounding World Cup Carnival a few years ago, so it was with a thumping heart that I started playing U.S.G.'s new World Cup game. Thankfully, it is a lot better than the aforementioned toady. However, it isn't as good as a lot of the other footy games on the market. The game suffers from a lack of variation, and although the opposing teams all have different values, I found that as long as I played Brazil or some other hot team, I nearly always lifted the coveted trophy - not exactly good value for money. I found the soccer sequence quite addictive, but not addictive enough to warrant a purchase.

ALEX

I keep going back to Italy 1990. It isn't a particularly good footy game, and it is riddled with stupid bugs, and it certainly doesn't offer a challenge as I beat it on my first go, yet somehow I keep returning for another go. Everything about the game seems to be well presented and polished, but as a game it doesn't hang together. Playable, but definitely not worth the cash.

COMING SOON...



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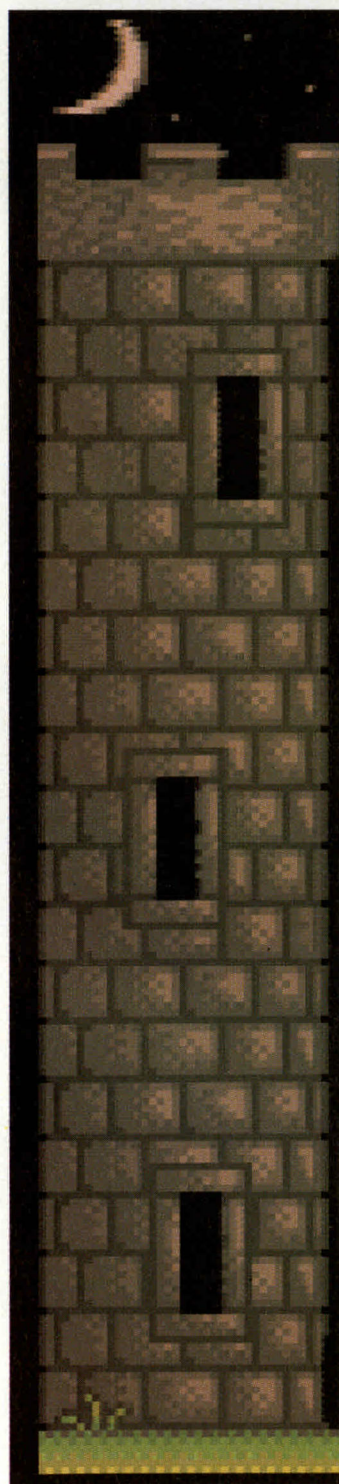
CASTLE MASTER

Incentive are quite well known for their Freespace system of 3-D graphics and no-one has managed to come up with an alternative that can actually beat them. However, Incentive's games are not the usual all graphics and no gameplay: each of their three games have done amazingly well on both 8 and 16-bit formats. Well,

their latest title has them jumping on the bandwagon of the ever-popular RPG games. You play the part of either a Prince or Princess who has had her loved one carried away by a giant bird to the evil spirit's castle. Plucking up all of your courage you go in pursuit of your companion, equipped with just a few stones for your

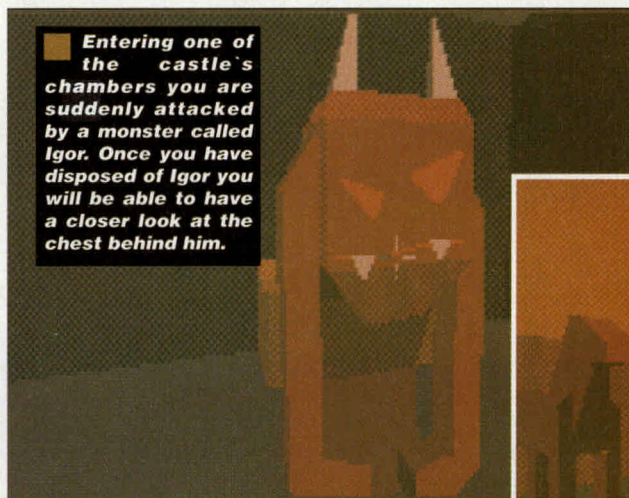
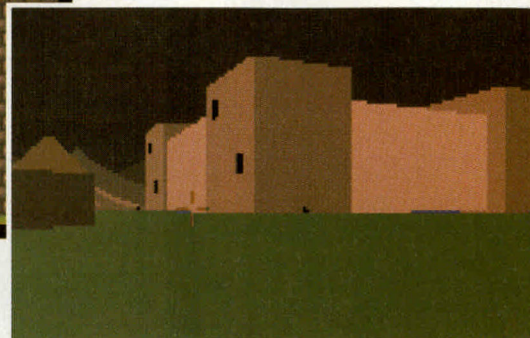
protection. Starting from outside the castle you must find some way of getting in (which isn't that hard) and then make your way through the maze of corridors within the castle's inner sanctum. Most of the doors within the castle will be locked and you will need to find the right keys before your search can go any further. Some of the

keys will be just hanging around on hooks, but the more important ones will be hidden away, and some careful thought will be needed to find them. Food and drink can be found here and there within the castle walls, and these will be used to boost your stamina and keep you strong, and strong you will have to be if you are to



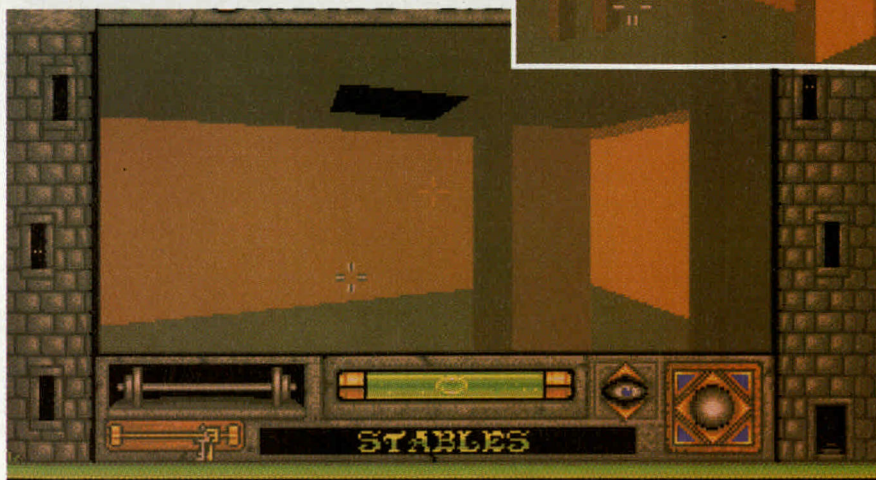
(Above) You arrive at the castle's draw bridge only to find it closed with no other entrances to be seen. However, if you can't work out what to do, there's a clue in the wizard's hut.

(Below) You enter a small building just outside the castle walls in the hope of finding some clues, but apart from the food on the table there's only a painting on the wall.



Entering one of the castle's chambers you are suddenly attacked by a monster called Igor. Once you have disposed of Igor you will be able to have a closer look at the chest behind him.

(Below) Although the stable doesn't look as though it has anything to offer, it's quite the opposite. Getting down on your hands and knees you crawl under the horse to find a hidden key



Crawling is quite important in some parts of the game, and you'll need to get down on your hands and knees to get in holes as well as find certain objects.

GRAPHICS

Like its predecessors, *Castle Master* has very impressive 3-D graphics, probably the best. The update is very good as well and keeps the game going nicely.

73%

survive the countless attacks from the selection of evil monsters that dwell within some of the castle's chambers. A few well-aimed stones will usually dispose of most of the spirits, but a few will put up

SOUND

A good tune on the title screen, and quite a few sound effects within the game itself. Enough to be adequate for the game.

80%

quite a struggle and hand out just as much damage as you do. The way you look at things can make all the difference to the game as well. Many an object will be missed if you don't get down on all fours and take a peek under certain tables or shelves.



At last, you find the stairs that lead to one of the four towers, but once you get there, will you have the right keys to do anything else?

Stones are your only means of defence against the horde of evil monsters that dwell within the castle. However, a well-aimed rock can sometimes activate a handy switch or lever.



You mustn't let your strength get too low when you're inside the castle, but if it starts to get a bit dodgy, a quick mouthful of cheese will restore some of your lost energy.



A small flying monster attacks you as you enter a room, but a couple of rocks soon get rid of any threat. But now he's dead you've got to find what he was protecting.

STEVE

I have been quite impressed by the 16-bit *Freescape* games, but *Castle Master* blows all of the past efforts away. The 3D system has been improved so that you can do practically anything, and the game's speed doesn't suffer for it either. The addition of a number of creatures to kill made sure that the game didn't get dull, but with so much to see and do, and so many humorous quirks to find, I hardly think that you will get bored with it. By far the best *Freescape* game yet, and I look forward to the next one with bated breath.

Switches and levers are other things that you will have to contend with. Although when you activate a lever nothing seems to happen, very often something within another part of the castle will be opening to reveal a

valuable object or a secret room. Your strength is shown by a set of dumbbells in the bottom left hand corner of the screen; the more weights it has, the better off you are, but should the dumbbell loses all its weights, you will die and have to start again. Just below the strength bar is the key rack, and this is where all the keys that you find will be shown. In the bottom centre of the screen is the spirit level; this will be fairly low at the beginning of the game but as you progress it will get gradually higher until eventually it will reach the end of the bar, and your character will be overpowered by the evil forces of the castle.

DOUG

Although I never really had enough time to enjoy *Incentive's* previous games, *Castle Master* grabbed my interest. The graphics are amazingly smooth and they very seldom slow down. The playing area is very large, and you can soon get lost if you don't make a map of the lower parts of the castle. All in all, *Castle Master* is a great game and is well worthy of anyone's money.

ALEX

Castle Master is the fourth *Freescape* title from *Incentive*, and in my opinion, it is easily their best release to date. I found that their previous titles failed because they lacked atmosphere, but *Castle Master* absolutely oozes atmosphere, as well as being much easier to relate to and being more down to earth (literally!). On the whole, *Castle Master* should appeal to a wider variety of gamers than the original *Freescape* did, and should be considered for your software collection.

OVERALL RATING

76%

ACCOLADE £19.95

THIRD COURIER

Last week three top NATO couriers left your headquarters with some top secret plans - the plans never made it to their destination, and neither did two of the couriers. The third courier had killed his two colleagues and then made off with the plans, his suspected destination being Moscow to rendezvous with some KGB leaders. Your mission is to make your way to Berlin where the third courier was last seen, and recover the stolen plans. A lot depends on your mission being successful - do not let us down.

That's the plot, and with very little else you must somehow find the whereabouts of the plans, and hopefully the third courier. Before the game can be started you must create your agent. A small amount of background information must be given, such as where you have spent most of your life; what your occupation is; what is your favourite activity; and, of course, your age and

sex. From this the computer will generate your statistics.

Your actions throughout the adventure are controlled via the mouse, in conjunction with icons and menus. Movement is achieved by clicking on a compass shown in the lower right-hand side of the screen, but most of the other commands are activated from menu bars. There are three menus in all: the action bar which allows you to take, drop, use, etc; the inventory to let you know what you're carrying; and the places menu which can be used to travel from place to place. Encounter options are also available, but these are only used when you are interacting with someone, whether the encounter be friendly or unfriendly.

GRAPHICS

Average graphics, with adequate variety for a game such as this, but I felt that there could have been a little bit more

55%

SOUND

Quite a few sound effects during the game to keep up the atmosphere, but little else.

50%

DOUG

The Third Courier is a very average game. It's quite playable, with a few nice sound effects and some standard graphics, but there's nothing to really turn your head and impress like a 16-bit game should. Controlling the game is fairly easy, but like all menu-driven adventures, I feel that the game isn't quite flexible enough. The Third Courier isn't too bad, but nothing great.

ALEX

The idea behind The Third Courier is a great one, and Accolade have made a brave attempt at bringing out the potential of being a spy, but I'm afraid it lacked addictiveness. The graphics are good, and although the sound is average, it is adequate. My main gripe is that the icon system is too limited for my liking, and I wish there were a few more options open to the player. The Third Courier is one of the better spy games available, and anyone looking for a 'sleuth' game could do themselves a favour and look no further.

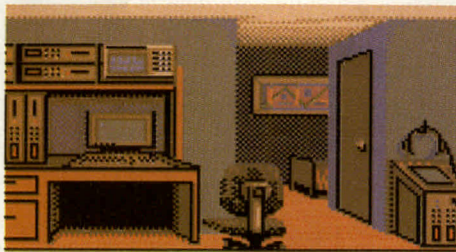
■ *Selecting what your character has done in the past could make a difference in the adventure. But whatever you choose it's how you play the game that matters.*

Electronic Dossier - *Setting the Stage*

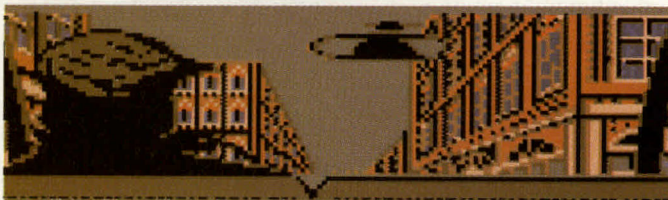
Sex: ☒ M ☐ F	CIA Agent
Spent Most Of My Life: ☐ On a Farm ☐ In a Small Town ☐ Urban Area ☐ Inner City ☐ Moving About	Cover Occupation: ☒ Artist/Musician ☐ Journalist ☐ Chef ☐ Photographer ☐ Gambler ☐ Golf Pro ☐ Librarian
Favorite Leisure Activity: ☒ Hunting/Fishing ☐ Gardening ☐ Partying ☐ Team Sports ☐ Reading	Age Group: ☐ 25 to 34 ☐ 35 to 44 ☐ 45 to 64 ☐ 65 and over

Next Page Activate Done

■ *Starting from your home you prepare for the mission ahead. Using the action menu you collect a few items, including your gun; just remember to keep it handy.*



■ *Hailing a cab, you jump inside and look at the places menu to see where you can go. If necessary you can even tell him to "Follow that car".*



■ *Walking down the street you see a hurdey-gurdey man. If you want you can get something to eat, but information is what you need.*



■ *Stepping outside the building you bump into a policeman who starts to shoot at you. Maybe it's not such a good idea to go round with your gun out.*



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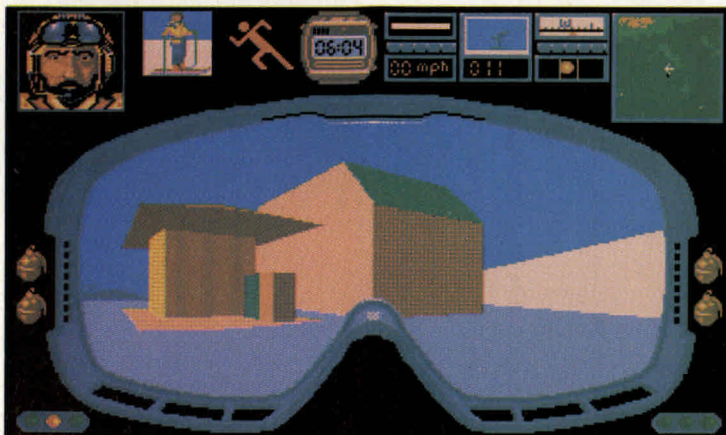
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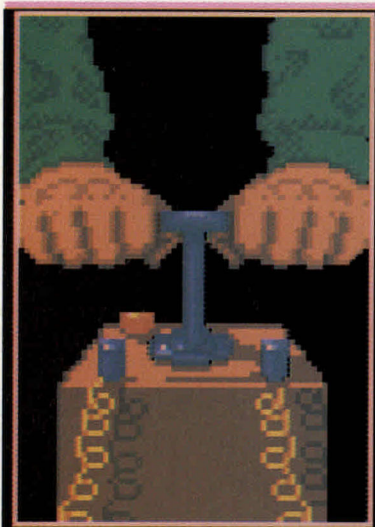
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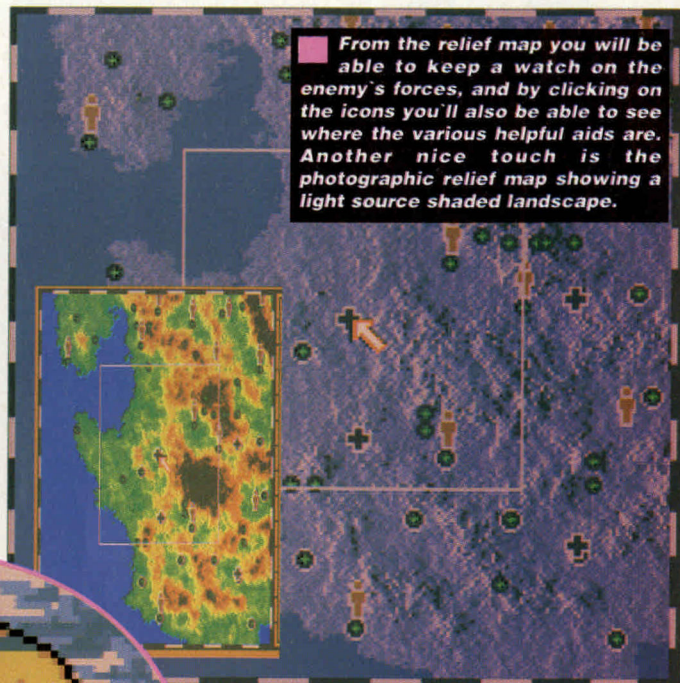
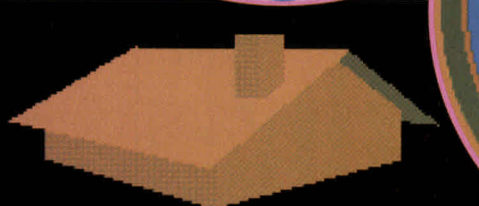
After travelling for a little while you arrive at one of the settlements. Supplies and a host of other things can be gained from settlements - just make sure the enemy aren't there as well.



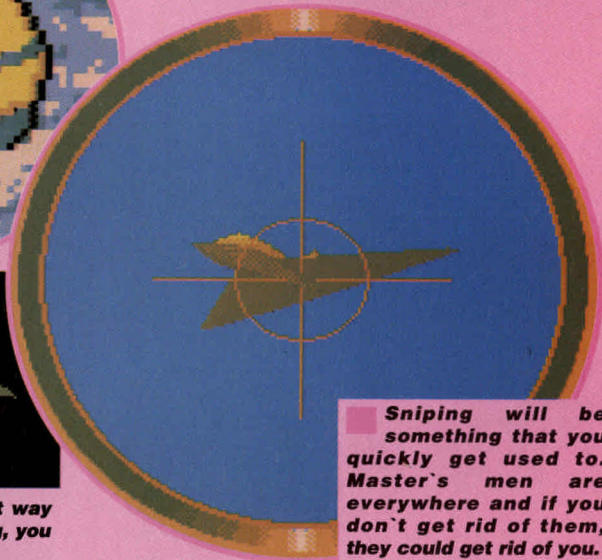
(Left) Skiing over the top of a hill you come face to face with a fir tree. Unfortunately you don't manage to turn in time and end up crashing into it, getting quite a few bruises in the process.



Slowing down the progression of the enemy is all important, and the best way to achieve this is to dabble in a bit of sabotage. Going to a nearby building, you set up the explosives and let them have it.



From the relief map you will be able to keep a watch on the enemy's forces, and by clicking on the icons you'll also be able to see where the various helpful aids are. Another nice touch is the photographic relief map showing a light source shaded landscape.



Sniping will be something that you quickly get used to. Master's men are everywhere and if you don't get rid of them, they could get rid of you.

DOUG

Midwinter is without a doubt a superb game. The graphics are some of the best I've seen; the amount of work that went into the map alone is unbelievable. The game is amazingly addictive, and even if you eventually do manage to beat it, the options will keep the game going for ages to come. Midwinter is a very good game and will probably appeal to most people, and it's definitely a game I would recommend.

The year is 2039 and the Earth has just been hit by a huge meteorite. It hit our planet with tremendous force, starting a chain reaction of disasters world wide. Places as far away as London and Sydney felt the shockwaves. A giant tidal wave hit the

RAINBIRD £29.95

MIDWINTER

west coast of America destroying everything that was in its path. Millions of tons of dust and dirt had risen into the Earth's atmosphere due to the impact of the Meteorite causing the temperature to drop dramatically. Years passed, and by 2056 it looked like we were in the beginning stages of another ice age.

Midwinter has you playing the part of Captain Stark. With a number of other peace officers

you must patrol a region once known as the Azores. Like the rest of the world, all the small islands have been completely covered by treacherous ice fields. However, with the introduction of Heat Mines, the islands became an oasis within a desolate desert. Life in the new colony seemed calm enough until one day a hostile army arrived and made their base in the quiet village of Sleeping Hollow. The rogue band was led by General Masters, whose aim

GRAPHICS

Some really impressive graphics that stun you from the very second you see them. A lot of work went into the map alone - brilliant.

84%

was to take over the island and use his factories and Heat Mines for his own use.

As the game begins, the enemy has already captured three of your bases and is advancing rapidly. You must recruit members of the original settlers and form a resistance movement. This in itself is no easy task as each of the characters has his or her own personality and traits. As you learn of the impending threat, you must ski to the nearest base and alert one of your colleagues. As you



RESISTANCE

Captain Stark explains about the invasion of the Free Villages and asks for help in resisting General Masters' army.



"That's your problem, not mine," snarls Grazzini.



Grazzini

(Above) At last, you reach your destination and without rest make your way into where one of your colleagues is waiting. But now you've found him, will you be able to recruit him?

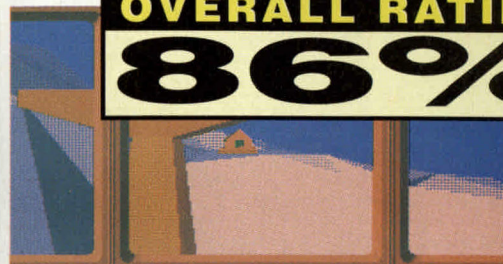


(Below) Using a cable car to get to the top of a mountain, you then proceed to take to the air in your hang-glider. You must now remember to keep an eye on your map to see where the upcurrents will be. So take care.

AMIGA ACTION

OVERALL RATING

86%

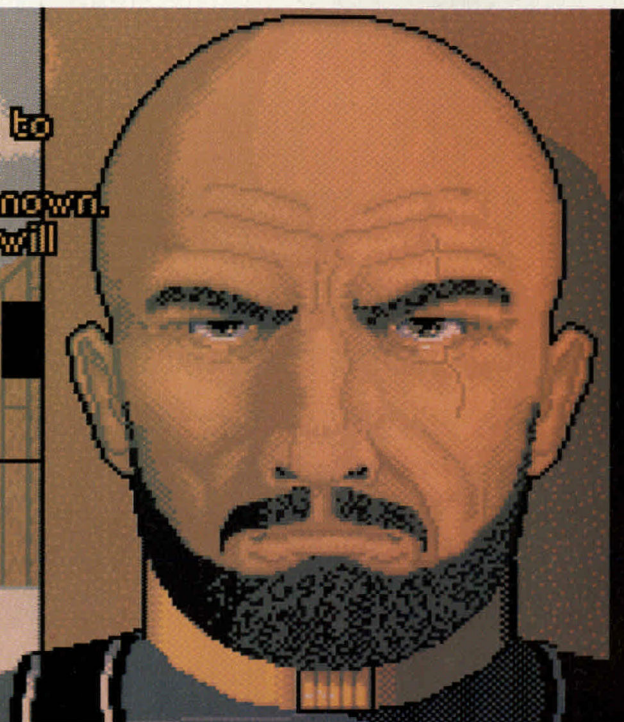


On the way to recruit one of your Peace Force you are stops in your tracks by a line of impassable mountains. However, on checking your map you notice a handy cable car in the area.

REBELLIOUS DOGS!

You should have known it was useless to resist me! I, General Masters, am the greatest warlord the world has ever known. You have lost the battle and now you will lose your lives!

If the going gets too tough there's always the option of surrender. Unfortunately, the firing squad isn't exactly what I had in mind.



SOUND

Quite a selection of different sound effects are used throughout the game to add to the atmosphere.

76%

enter settlements you may utilize the various amenities there. Garages are very rewarding places as they usually house snow buggies which are a faster mode of transport. Naturally there are other means of getting around: cable cars span the more treacherous peaks, but hang-gliding is by far the fastest and most dangerous method.

The strategy part of the game is based around the player's interpretation of the main map. From it, you can see at a glance the nearest building or person. The terrain must be studied carefully and routes planned beforehand in

ALEX

This game has taken an astonishing four man-years to produce. Billed as "The strategy game of the decade", Midwinter has certainly got something to live up to. The well-designed icon system makes the game a joy to play and icy landscapes prove breathtaking. Games of this calibre are few and far between; Midwinter rates alongside my all-time favourite, *Dungeon Master*. In a nutshell, *Midwinter* is a rarity - it'll keep you up and will hold your attention for months to come.

order to make the most use of your resources. Of course, there are a number of different strategies. Guerilla war and

STEVE

It isn't often that a game can actually live up to its self-proclaimed title of a 'mega-game', but *Midwinter* certainly can. It is so obvious from the care that has been taken to make the game easy to get into and superb to look at, that this was a labour of love for the programmers, Maelstrom. The scenario drops you right in the thick of the action as a would-be James Bond, and you must plot Masters' destruction by teaming up with people whose abilities will prove useful and by perfecting offensive attacks - all of which must be performed as they would in real life. But to make it more realistic, people may bear grudges for things you have done in the past or get injured whilst doing something they aren't trained to do. In so small a space, I cannot sing half as many of the game's praises as I'd like to - it really is one of the best original 16-bit titles to be released and, as such, is an essential purchase.

sabotage are always firm favourites, the ability to use explosives can set the enemy back hours. Choosing which people to enlist is also important; for instance, if you recruit the scientist, and take him to a radio station, he'll use the equipment to

call up even more of your troops.

Beginners are best advised to try the training mode, while the more advanced players may increase the difficulty by introducing mortar-dropping planes and kamikaze drones.

FIREBIRD £24.95

FIRE AND BRIMSTONE

The fight between good and evil is everywhere, from mortal men to the very gods themselves. But now a time has come the balance could sway towards evil. Hel, goddess of Niflheim has launched her evil forces to assault the peaceful kingdom of Isengard. Upon hearing this the good gods decided on a plan of

action - one god must make his way to Hel herself and put a stop to her meddling. Thor, god of Thunder was the final choice because of his extreme strength and courage, but his mission will be fraught with evil and even gods can be killed. The fate of Isengard rests in Thor's hands.

Starting from the kingdom of

Alfheim, Thor must make his way down through the various lands until he reaches Hel herself for the final battle. Evil monsters are everywhere, each intent on killing Thor and making his queen triumphant. On his way through each kingdom Thor must keep his eye open for various parts of a key that will let you pass into the next level. However, Hel has not made things easy for you. At the end of each kingdom you will have to overcome one of Hel's deadliest creatures.

Potions and weapons can also be found along the way and these will come in very handy. There are four different types of potion, each being useful in one way or another. However, only two potions can be carried at once. There are quite a few weapons for Thor to find as well, but like the potions, Thor can

DOUG

Fire and Brimstone is just your basic flip-screen platform game, nevertheless I found it fun. The idea of the magic potions and different weapons is good, and the game's easy to get into, but becomes hard too quickly. This doesn't make the game boring, and being able to start from the level you just got killed on is good. Nothing special, but a nice little game.

only carry two at a time, so a careful decision will need to be made when Thor encounters a new weapon.

GRAPHICS

Good colourful graphics with quite a bit of variation in them. Nice backdrops as well that try to give a slight 3-D perspective.

64%

SOUND

There is only a short piece of music on the title screen, with the usual sound effects incorporated within the game.

58%

ALEX

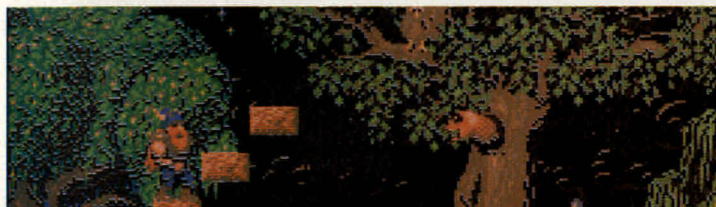
I wasn't overly impressed by Fire and Brimstone, mainly because it is too difficult. I found myself ripping out my hair when I managed to adventure onto the next screen, only to be greeted by a deadly monster before I'd even stepped all of the way into the new screen! This was partially made up for by the inclusion of potions and the like. Fire And Brimstone is as good as any arcade adventure/platform game that I can think of, but the difficulty may put some people off.



The various parts of a key must be found if you are to gain entrance to the next level, but not all of them are so easy to find.



With only a couple more pieces of the key to find, you luckily find a secret room that holds another part of the infamous key. But as you get further into the game the secret rooms get harder to find.



A selection of hidden books can be found throughout the game, and for each one you collect you will gain one extra life, but finding these books is no easy task.



(Above) There are four types of potion, and each one has a different use. The blue comes in most handy and, once drunk, a magical bridge will appear and make life that much easier for you.



(Left) You have all the parts to the key, and now the end-of-level guardian is the only thing that stands in your way. Choose one of your two weapons and let him have it.

OVERALL RATING

64%

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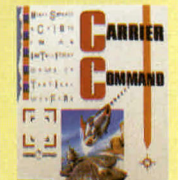
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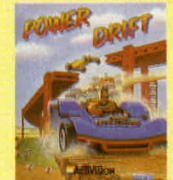
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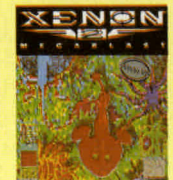
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GIVING THE GAME AWAY

Blimey O'Reilly, if it isn't the tenth issue already! It seems like only yesterday that we were running around in a panic trying to get the first issue out! Still, the best is yet to come, and Steve's got some real treats lined up for you in issue twelve - our birthday issue. Apparently, there's a big compo in the offing, along with a couple of other smaller ones - oops, I'm not supposed to tell you that, I'd better shut up before he moans at me. Right, on with the tips...

E-MOTION - U.S. GOLD

U.S. Gold's AA-rated ball bouncer may be producing more than its fair share of problems, so here is a useful little tip that allows you to skip any tricky levels. When the E-Motion title screen appears (the one with Einstein on it), type in the word MOONUNIT and press return. Now start the game as usual and press the following keys for the required effect:

- F1 - Skip a level.
- F2 - Go back a level.
- F3 - Go forward 10 levels.
- F4 - Go back 10 levels.

Thanks to Adrian Tuttle, from Manchester for that.



GALAXY FORCE II ACTIVISION

Here's a useful cheat from the game's programmer, good old Kevin Bulmer. On the title screen or during the game, type in the word DONKEY. It won't stop your energy going down, but pressing F3 takes you straight to the end of a level.



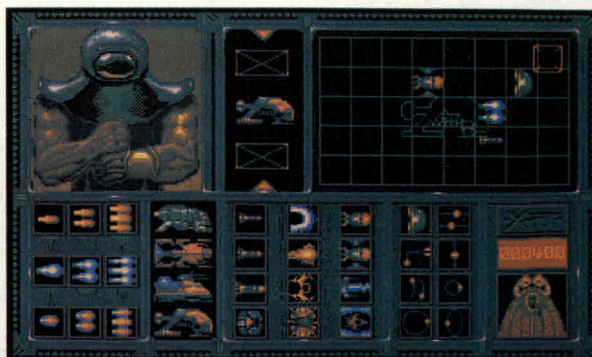
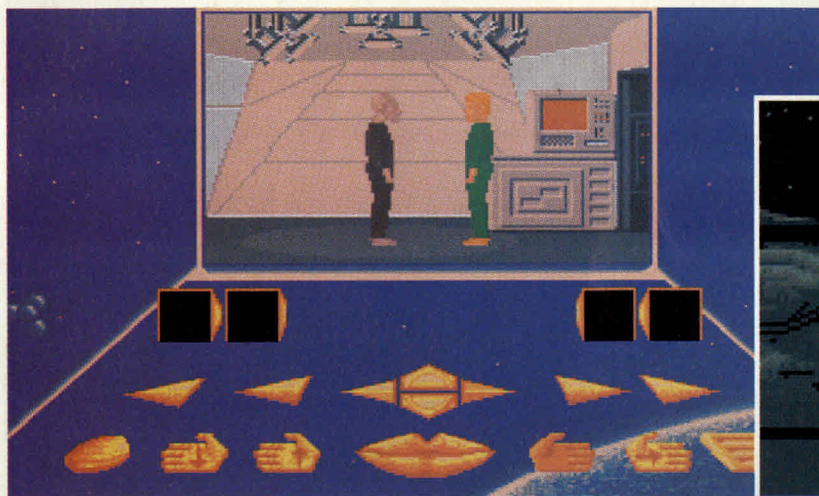
GHOSTBUSTERS II - ACTIVISION

If you're having a slime problem with this average film tie-in, then this cheat will give you a chance to look at some of the later stages. Turn on your Amiga, and when the workbench hand appears put Ghostbusters disk 2 in the drive. The hand will disappear for a little while and when it reappears take out disk 2 and replace it with disk 1. Now load the game in the usual manner, but when you are playing the game press ENTER on the numeric keypad and you will advance to the next stage. Ta very much to Mihir Vakil of London for that one.



X-OUT - RAINBOW ARTS

Here's another one from Mihir Vakili. If you saw the previous issues of AA you will already know how to get loads of money in X-Out, but just to make the game even easier, here's a cheat that will give you infinite energy as well. Insert the game disk while keeping both mouse buttons pressed, and keep them held down until the title screen appears. Then start the game and when you're in the shop hold down the HELP and DEL keys for a few seconds. Now, choose your ships as normal and you'll have infinite energy.

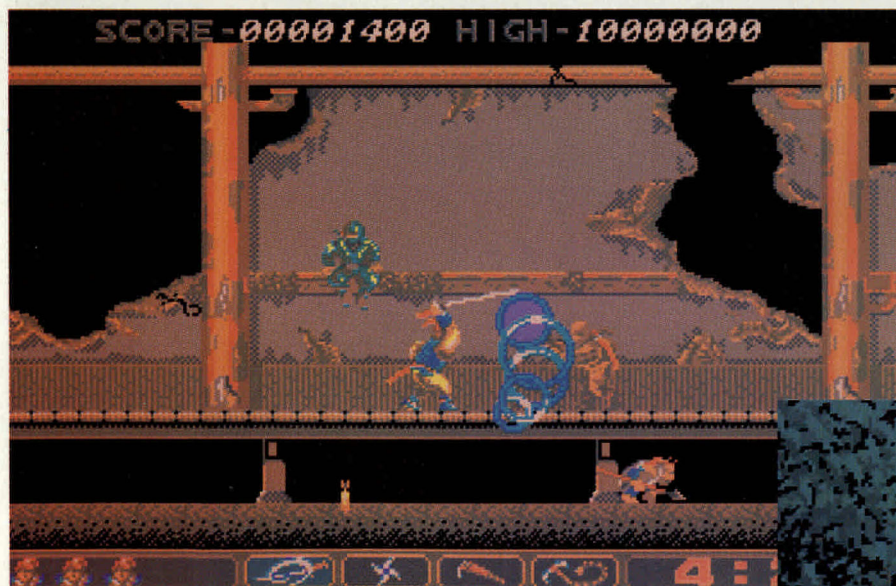


TIME SOLUTION PART FOUR - EMPIRE

Last month you had just entered Caesar's time period when we left you, so without further ado here's what to do. On the beach that you have arrived at, speak to the girl that you see there and take the statue she offers you. Give this statue to the guard on the next screen, and then continue right and talk to the circus master. With no other choice available, go into the arena and make your way past the lion to roughly the centre of the arena. Wait here and simply dodge the lions for as long as possible and then you will eventually be taken to Caesar. Take the ring, give him your amulet, and talk to him again. Go back to the guard you met earlier and give him the ring, and then make your way

back to the girl; talk to her, and then make your way back to Caesar. Once there, talk to Caesar and then the girl, and finally, to complete this part of the game, take back the amulet and go back to Historisat.

Give the amulet to the Protomek. Find Securimek and talk to him and he will put you in the jail. Take the screwdriver that is there and use it three times to pull the Securimek into the cell. Once the Securimek is in the jail, leave the cell and head right. Use the screwdriver to get a chip from one of the circuit boards, and then collect the spare battery. Put both of these in circuit board five and then enter the code 05510478 into the time machine.

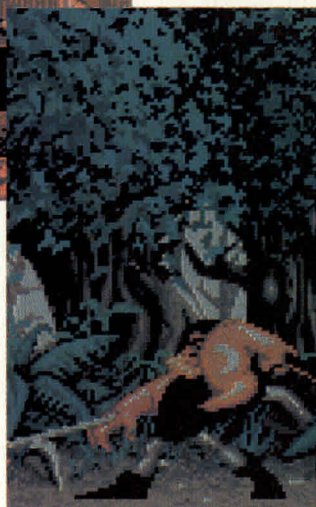


NINJA SPIRIT - ACTIVISION

The game's programmers, Images, have prepared a superb player's guide for us but we're keeping it till next month. However, we couldn't resist printing the cheat mode. As your ninja falls at the beginning of the game, type NO HUNS AT HAMPDEN AND NO SKOL AT IBROX. If it works - and it's certainly not easy getting it to - then pressing the keys 0 to 9 will allow you to skip to the relevant level. Thanks very much to Henry Clark for that one.

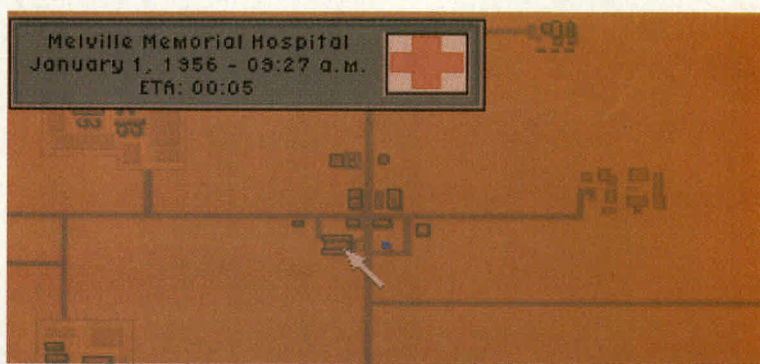
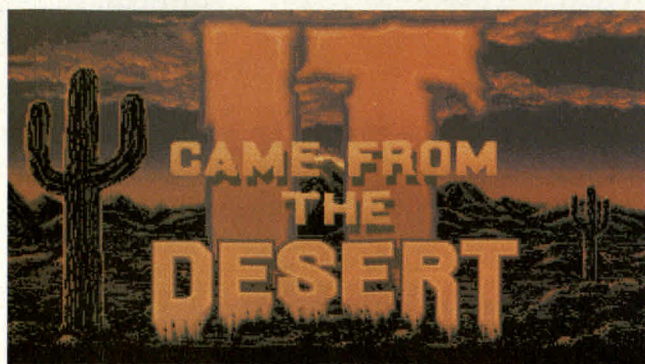
KIDGLOVES MILLENNIUM

A handy cheat here for this great platform game. While playing the game, pause it, and then type in RHIANNON followed by the F9 key. If the game doesn't unpause itself, press F1 and then pause the game again and retype the above. This will make you invincible. The various other function keys can also give effects by typing RHIANNON and then pressing them instead of F9, but we'll leave you to find out what they do.



IVANHOE OCEAN

I wasn't impressed by this. The graphics were pretty enough, but the gameplay was tedious. Mind you, the later levels were OK, so here's a cheat from Nick Cannes of Basildon. Pause the game, and type ZOBINETTE, followed by return, then unpause the game. Now, just press 'I' for an extra life or 'N' to skip to the next stage - easy, huh!



GTGA: ANTHEADS

If it wasn't for your kid brother you wouldn't be in this mess, but there's no point in crying over spilt milk, it's too late to go back now, and what you did was for the best anyhow. But where are you now, and what happened to the trigger that was stolen. This is the beginning of the story, but things will start to hot up pretty soon.

You start from your home base, near the centre of Lizard's Breath (the same place you started from in It Came), and this is where you will return at the end of each day to relax and think about what you have found out.

THIRD TIME LUCKY

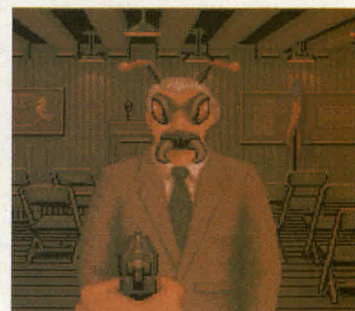
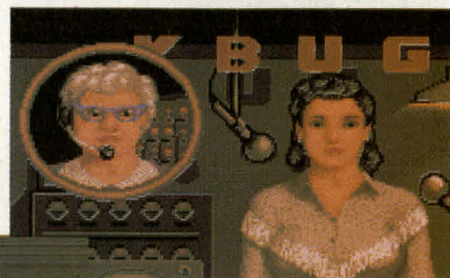
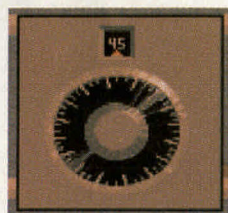
The first day will be pretty quiet and there isn't much to find out, but go into town and get acquainted with Elmer at the gas station, and other places you want to check out. The second day is quite bland as well, with very little to see or do, except for a run in with Jackie which eventually ends up with you having to fight her boyfriend. However, on the third day all hell breaks loose. About 9 a.m. Jackie will knock on your door and ask for help. Invite her in and wait for her to change into something a little more comfortable (an Anthhead to be

precise). A gun will now appear in your hand, and if you are to save Jackie you will have to shoot off both of the antennae on top of her head. You'll have quite a few bullets to accomplish this task, but take your time and aim for the bottom of the antennae; shoot the tops of them and you will achieve nothing.

Once she is restored to her beautiful self, make a note of the number she tells you, which you will find a use for later, and then head for Neptune Hall. Once you arrive there, you should come face to face with yet another Anthhead, all intent on put a stop to your snooping around. As with Jackie, shoot of the man's antennae and take a note of the number he gives you so that you now have two numbers.

SUPER AND SPICE...

Provided you haven't gone gallivanting all over Lizard's Breath, it will still be quite early in the day, and you'll have plenty of time to get to the University and find a young boy there who seems



to know quite a bit about what's going on. He'll tell you all he knows without any persuasion, and he will also give you some Pez (a sugary thing that will enable you to tell which people are the Anthheads). With just a little time left before nightfall make your way over to the mines and with the aid of your trusty Pez, find your third and last Anthhead. You should now have all three numbers to the safe in the hospital, so get yourself over there and try some safe cracking. Once at the hospital, dive into a

TAKING CONTROL OF THE TOWN

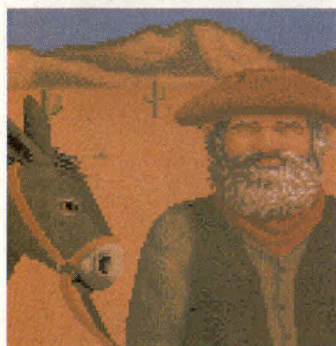
handy wheelchair and head for the basement. Up in the top right-hand corner of the basement you will come across the safe, and

following the instructions given in your manual, use the three numbers to enter the safe and get the valuable documents within, thus giving you control of the town and all of its resources (controlled via the situation map in the police station).

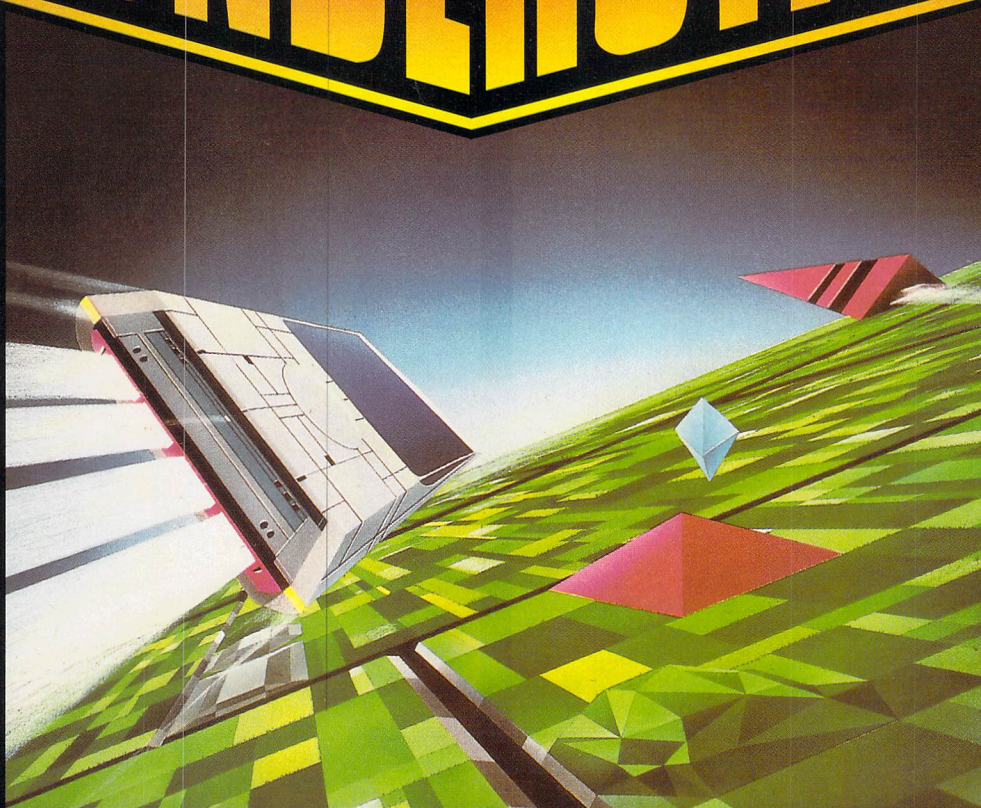
The rest is virtually the same as It Came. All you have to do is find

DEFEATING THE QUEEN

the Queen Ant's nest (which was near mine four in my game), jump into the hole left via one of the Ants, and then simply leave a time-bomb under her to rid Lizard's Breath once again of a fate worse than Australian soap-operas.



THUNDERSTRIKE



IBM PC VGA SCREEN SHOTS



IN JUST 200 years the Earth is controlled by the TV networks and defence industries. The ultimate TV phenomenon is coverage of the military olympics... and the ultimate event is 'Ground Defence'. Gladiators man deadly craft, their mission to protect the communication tracks and ground installations. Their goal - and yours - is to be knighted 'Defender of the Ground'.

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- Choose to pilot a variety of sleek Defender class fighters
- Heads-up display featuring radar displays and weapon indicators
- Various weapon pick-ups, shield drones and turbo-thrusters
- Watch the TV ratings go up as the action gets hotter!
- Available from the end of June, 1990 for the Atari ST, Commodore Amiga (£24.99) and the IBM PC (EGA/VGA) (£29.99)

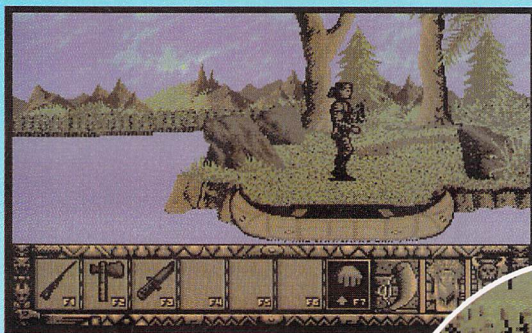
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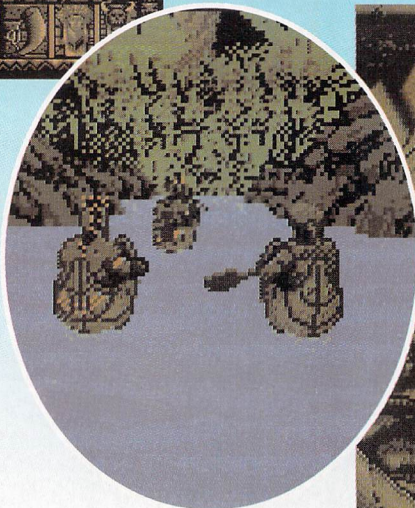
MILLENNIUM

GTGA: COLORADO



THE WINNEMUCCA FOREST

Starting from the canoe, head east into the next screen. Load your gun and shoot the Iroquois that makes his way towards you, and then continue east and enter the forest. At the crossroads take the upper trail and head back west. When you arrive at the screen with the archer, go behind the trees to avoid his arrows and then use the knife or hatchet to dispose of him. In the next screen you will come up against the Iroquois chief; use the hatchet to kill him, and then take the necklace and skin. Go back to the last crossroads and climb the mountain, being careful not to fall off the edge (it's advisable for you to save the game at the peak). Pick up the nuggets at the top of the mountain, and then climb all the way back down and return to the first crossroads. Go east from the crossroads until you come across another archer. To kill him, hide in the first recess, and cause him to shoot an arrow by moving diagonally backwards and forwards, then place yourself in his line of sight, make a jump and take cover in the second recess. Cause the archer to fire another arrow and then use the knife or hatchet to kill him. Be careful of the jump in the next screen, and then carry straight on.

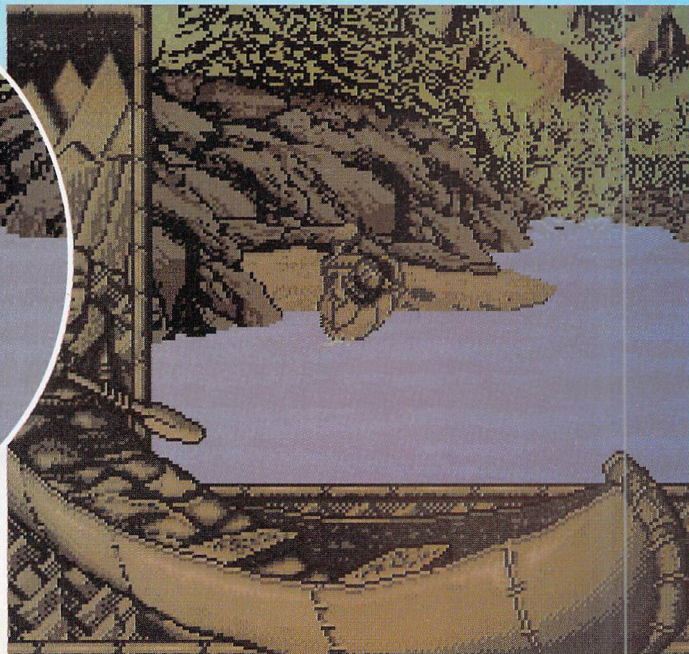


MAC BIGGLE

Swap the nuggets, skin and necklace with him, and if necessary, drink a potion. Now continue walking east and climb to the end of the blind alley.



Staying alive in the old Wild West is no easy thing, especially with all those nasty Indians and animals about, but it is possible to stay in one piece. Well, below is the first part of a two-part solution (the next part appearing in the next issue) to guide you through the game, and even tells you the best way to dispose of some of the animals.



THE CANYON OF DEATH

Climb up, avoid the Apaches and then continue east; take care at the jump. On the other side you will be attacked by two Apaches; use the gun to dispose of these two, and then save the game. Continue on the lower road until you get to the next screen. As soon as you enter, move into the recess and reload your gun. Fool the archer into firing at you, then move back out of the recess and shoot him; walk east. Kill the Apache you come across with either the knife or hatchet. Do the same in the next screen, and then walk east again. Yet again, take

care on the two jumps, and after you have got to the other side, reload the gun. Use the gun as soon as you enter the next screen, and then use the axe or knife to get rid of the Apache chief. Change the powder horn (freeing one icon), pick up the necklace and the peace-pipe. Go back to the fork and take the staircase; at the top of the stairs reload the gun, and as soon as you arrive in the next screen use it; reload the gun once more, shoot the next Apache you come across and then use the axe or knife to finish him off.

MUSIC

Drop the peace-pipe in front of the Hopi chief and swap it for the silver bullet. Return to the first room in the canyon, make two left turns and pick up the nuggets, then return to the forest.

MAC BIGGLE

Trade the nuggets and the necklaces, drink a potion and return to the canoe.

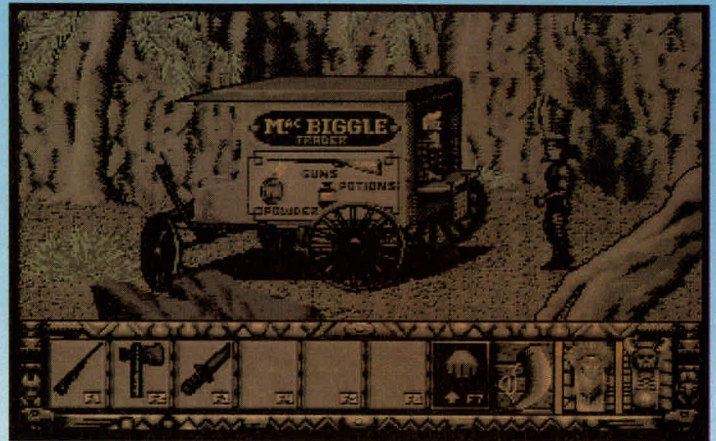


GTGA: COLORADO



BIG BEAR FOREST

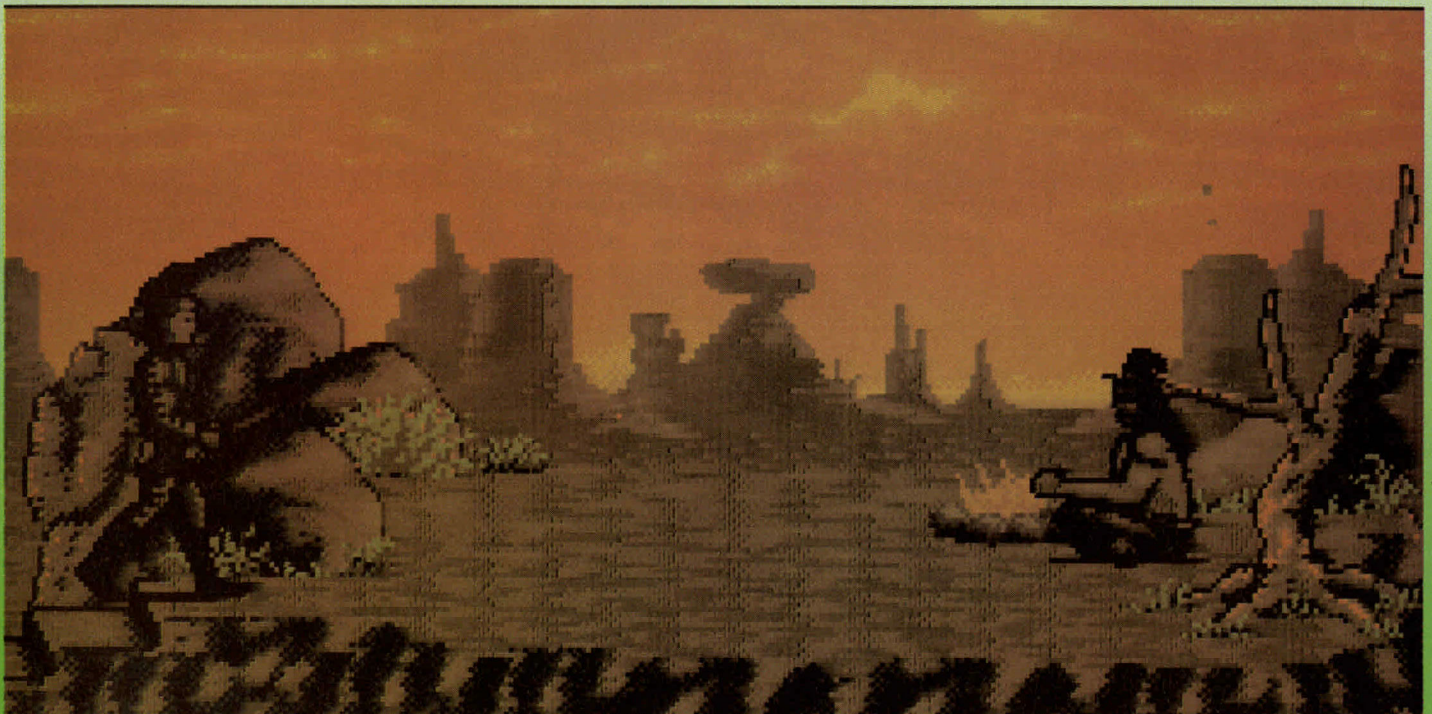
Take a right turn twice and then prepare to fight the first of the big bears. there are three methods that can be used but the best way is the third method. Firstly, you can kill the bear with a stick of dynamite and one bullet; ,secondly, you can use one complete powder charge; lastly, is to fight him with the knife. After you have defeated the bear, go right for two passages, take the passage at the back to save the game, and then come back to the second passage (in front of the tree on the right) and cross the field of rabbits. When you fight the wolf the best thing to do is to hit it immediately with a low blow from the axe, otherwise you will have to go back a place in order to let the wolf pass in front of you so you can give it a low blow with the axe, or, you can simply avoid it by not moving in a straight line. Continue right, and pick up the nugget.



THE GANG DOWN THE MINE

Throw the dynamite into the pile of rocks , then reload your gun and shoot the miner. Now select the knife or axe and strike at the miner who will then run away. Start moving right and when you get to the blind alley kill the miner you find there. Follow Huck through the mine where a passage will open up (NB - If there is a tree icon, you can pick up a nugget in the room to the right of the secret passage room); take this passage and at the first fork take the trail at the back. Go over a jump and at the second fork take the door at the bottom. Reload the gun, shoot the miner and then finish him off. Go to the second fork and take the door at the back, reload the gun, and on entering the room, take a few steps forward and shelter in the recess. Make the

Old Timer shoot, then use the gun in the low position to deal with him. Take, and then read the parchment (drop it afterwards). Go right and throw the dynamite into the pile of rocks, then go to the peak where you can save. Return to the first fork and go through the lower door; kill the miner with the gun, knife or axe. In the next room advance gradually, and when you hear the waggon, take a diagonal step into the recess (pick up the nugget if the icon is available), and then carry on right and kill the miner. Continue right and you will come across the head of the miners; if you still have some dynamite left use it to kill him, otherwise use the gun and knife or axe. Pick up the large nugget and return to the forest, and to the canoe.



POKES

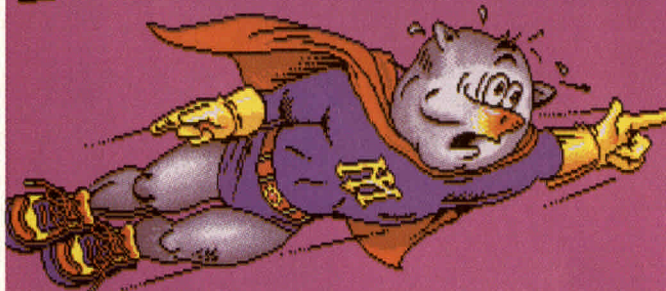
CORNER

Wow! what a response we've had to last month's pokes. It took a long time to find someone to deal with our pokes corner, but now we've found him it seems worth the wait. This month Mar has pulled out all the stoppers to rush you listings for Ocean's latest hit, *Cabal*; the newest in the cult Monty Mole series, *Impossamole*; and the big Christmas film tie-in, *Ghostbusters II*. As with last month these listings need to be typed into Amiga Basic, and the rest of the instructions are in the listing itself. Well, good luck, and see you next month.

IMPOSSAMOLE - GREMLIN

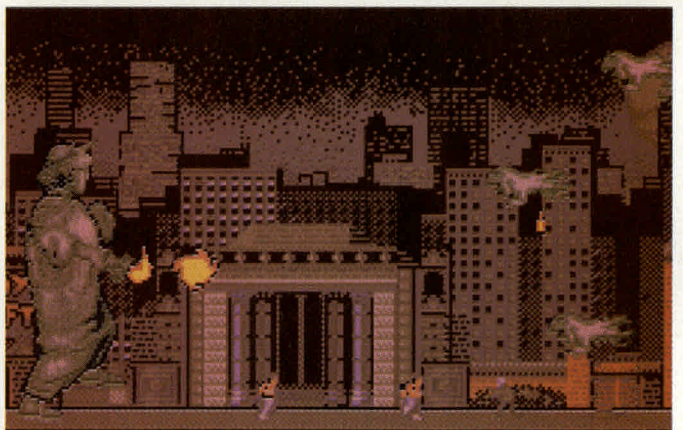
```
10 REM Infinite Strength and/or Super weapons for Impossamole
20 T=0:DIM CHEAT%(1024)
40 FOR X=0 TO 109
50 READ B$:B=VAL("&H"+B$):CHEAT%(X)=B
60 NEXT X
80 C=VARPTR(CHEAT%(0)):CALL C
90 REM *****
110 DATA 2C78,0004,7A40,E98D,7C30,7202,7006,E188
120 DATA 4EAE,FF3A,2A40,6602,4E75,70FF,4EAE,FEB6
130 DATA 4680,67F4,4680,49ED,0048,38C5,429C,38C0
140 DATA 93C9,4EAE,FEDA,28C0,288C,294C,0008,589C
150 DATA 4294,49ED,000E,1B7C,0005,0008,486D,0040
160 DATA 28DF,3886,41FA,0048,7000,2200,224D,4EAE
170 DATA FE44,4A80,66B2,224D,4BED,0100,41ED,FF24
180 DATA 337C,0002,001C,20C5,20CD,4290,3346,0012
190 DATA 4EAE,FE38,3B7C,41F9,0066,41ED,006C,45FA
200 DATA 0020,7015,30DA,51C8,FFFC,4EED,000C,7472
210 DATA 6163,6B64,6973,6B2E,6465,7669,6365,0000
220 DATA 317C,6082,0066,43FA,0024,700A,3121,51C8
230 DATA FFFC,4EE8,0016,41F9,0000,B000
240 REM *****
250 REM Include the line below for infinite strength
260 REM *****
270 DATA 4268,427E,317C,4A39,423E
280 REM *****
290 REM Include the line below for Infinite Super Weapons
300 REM *****
310 DATA 4268,51A6
320 REM *****
330 DATA 4ED0,0000,0000,0000,0000,0000,0000,0000
340 REM *****
350 REM Type in this routine and insert game disk in
360 REM Drive 0.Run it and Impossamole should load
370 REM as usual.
380 REM *****
```

IMPOSSAMOLE



CABAL - OCEAN

```
10 DIM CODE%(255)
20 FOR N=0 TO 41
30 READ A$:A=VAL("&H"+A$)
40 CODE%(N)=A
50 NEXT N
60 CHEAT=VARPTR(CODE%(0))
60 CALL CHEAT
70 REM TYPE IN THIS LISTING AND SAVE FOR FUTURE USE.
80 REM RUN IT AND THEN INSERT CABAL DISK AND RESET YOUR
90 REM AMIGA USING CONTROL/AMIGA/AMIGA KEYS.
100 REM GAME SHOULD LOAD AS USUAL WITH INFINITE LIVES.
110 DATA 2078,0004,41E8,0022,43FA,0016,2149,000C
120 DATA 7200,7017,D258,51C8,FFFC,4641,3081,4E75
130 DATA 202E,FE3A,41FA,002E,2080,41FA,0014,43F8
140 DATA 0300,2D49,FE3A,700F,22D8,51C8,FFFC,4E75
150 DATA 0CA9,0003,C000,0028,6608,33FC,4A28,0003
160 DATA 7C56,4EF9
```



GHOSTBUSTERS II - ACTIVISION

```
10 DIM CODE%(255)
20 FOR N=0 TO 47
30 READ A$:A=VAL("&H"+A$)
40 CODE%(N)=A
50 NEXT N
60 CHEAT=VARPTR(CODE%(0))
60 CALL CHEAT
70 REM TYPE IN THIS LISTING AND SAVE FOR FUTURE USE.
80 REM RUN IT AND THEN INSERT GHOSTBUSTERS 2 DISK AND RESET YOUR
90 REM AMIGA USING CONTROL/AMIGA/AMIGA KEYS.
100 REM GAME SHOULD LOAD AS USUAL WITH INFINITE LIVES AND SLIME.
110 DATA 2078,0004,41E8,0022,43FA,0016,2149,000C
120 DATA 7200,7017,D258,51C8,FFFC,4641,3081,4E75
130 DATA 202E,FE3A,41FA,003A,2080,41FA,0014,43F8
140 DATA 0300,2D49,FE3A,700F,22D8,51C8,FFFC,4E75
150 DATA 0CA9,0007,D300,0028,6614,23FC,6100,FA20
160 DATA 0007,C534,23FC,33FC,0001,0007,C538,4EF9
```


DYNASTY WARS COMPO

It has been 400 years since Liu He, the founder of the Han Dynasty, established the country.

Lights, Camera and (Amiga) Action With U.S. Gold!

Converted from the Capcom coin-op, Dynasty Wars, is this month's biggie from U.S. Gold. Transferred to the Amiga by veteran coders, Tiertex, it is an eight-stage hack'n'slay romp with you guiding your selected warrior against all manner of enemy warriors. In fact, coupled with the noisy sound effects and bloody action, the whole thing starts to resemble one of those badly made martial arts films with every punch landing home with a noisy crunch and every would-be star grunting if they so much as look over their shoulder. So, thought we, to tie in with this line of thinking, you might like to be able to make your own - every bit as awful - films, and, thanks to those ever-generous bods at U.S. Gold, you now

can. The Birmingham soft co. are offering one of the newest camcorders available, and it's a rather nifty, not to mention small, unit that can record whatever subject matter you deem necessary. So, just picture the scene: you could be the next Sam Raimi and create a low-budget Evil Dead clone, or you could even create a potential Hollywood blockbuster - but, to be honest, we doubt it! In addition to the main prize, U.S.G. are also offering three runners-up a normal hand-held camera to take snap-shots of all your mates, family, etc. and ten more winners will receive a copy of Dynasty Wars.

The compo is based around anagrams, and you must unscramble them and work out which U.S.G. titles they are. Once you have managed that, scrawl your answers on the form provided, and send it in to our usual address marked:

Hieee-yaahh! Compo, Amiga Action, Interactive Publishing, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK10 4NP.

Also, make sure that your entries are in by the 15th of July.

The anagrams:

1. Dritser.
2. Boot Runt Uru.
3. Ion Tome.
4. Wrاند Cock.
5. Blunt Heap Red.
6. Trace Big Lk.
7. Lead Lust.
8. I Joan Nan Dies.
9. Dr Molest
10. Thaw Tables K

Amiga Action Competition Rules

The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding competitions or the results of competitions. All prizes are offered believing them to be available. If, however, a prize is unavailable we reserve the right to substitute a prize of comparable value. No cash alternatives will be given. Results will be published as quickly as possible and prizes despatched as quickly as possible. Please refrain from phoning regarding competition results or prize delivery. Employees of Interactive Publishing Ltd. and companies participating in competitions are not eligible to enter.

The answers to the U.S.Gold competition are:

Answer 1 Answer 2.....
Answer 3 Answer 4.....
Answer 5 Answer 6.....
Answer 7 Answer 8.....
Answer 9 Answer 10

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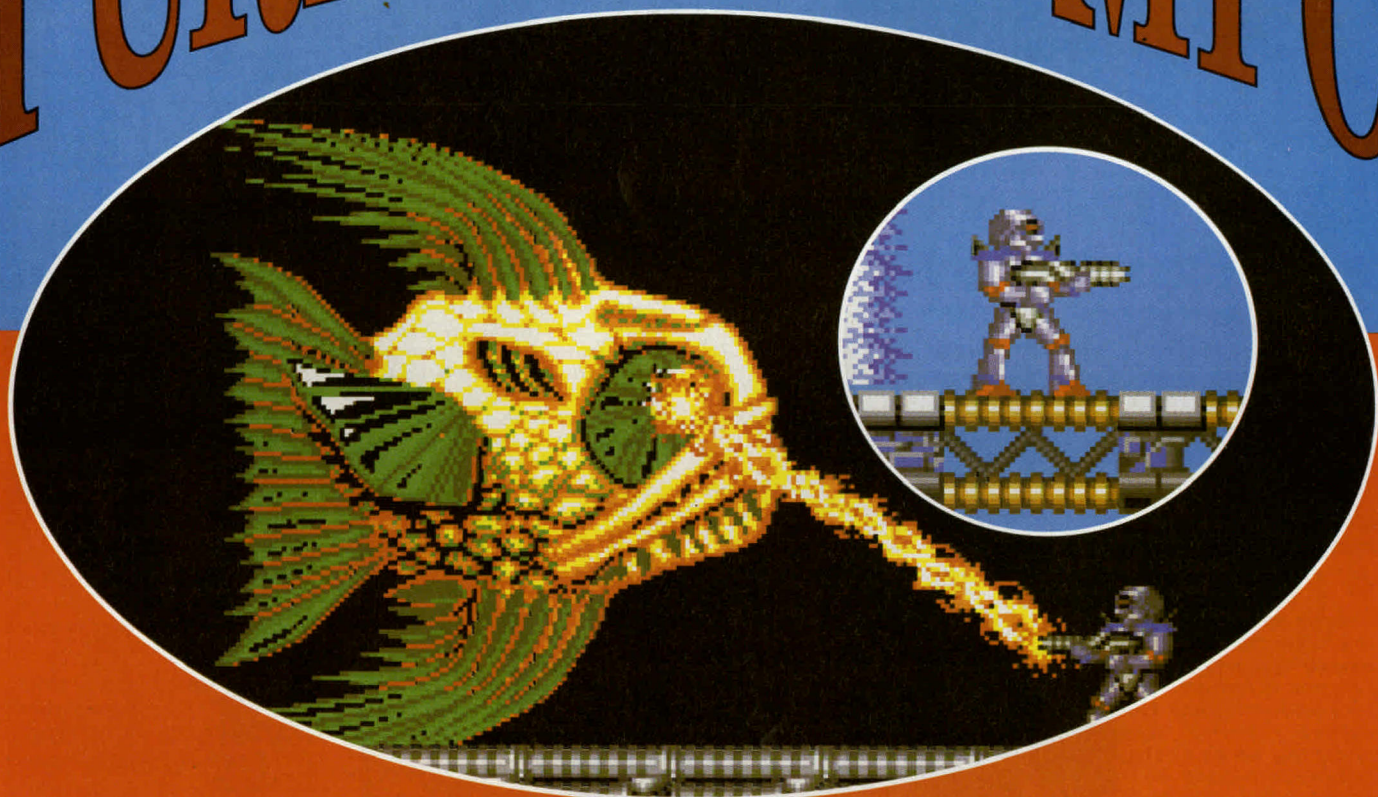
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TURRICAN COMPO



Play Hard, Play Loud With Rainbow Arts And Turrigan!!

Following up X-Out can't have been easy, but Rainbow Arts have excelled themselves with Turrigan, their new eight-way scroller set over five different planets. It's reviewed this issue and, by way of a celebration of its success, those generous people behind the game are offering a nifty CD player so that your running and shooting can be accompanied by whatever

er raucous soundtrack you so wish. Just picture it: you could collect energy crystals to the sounds of classic rock, or you could exterminate the massive end-of-level guardians to the sound of Hip-House - what more could you want? In addition, twenty-five runners-up will win copies of Turrigan and X-Out. So, what do you have to do to win one of these amazing

prizes? Easy, just find the names of six Rainbow Arts games in the wordsquare below, and send your answers in to:

Crash, Kapow! It's The Turrigan Comp, Amiga Action, Interactive Publishing, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK10

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The games you must find:

Conqueror, Circus Attractions, X Out, Turrigan, Spherical.

Finally, we've split up the words Grand Monster Slam so you've got to find them, too!

Competition Rules.

The same rules apply as in the U.S. Gold compo, so read them and find out how the Ed's decision is final, and about no correspondence, and tune in next month for more thrilling prizes...

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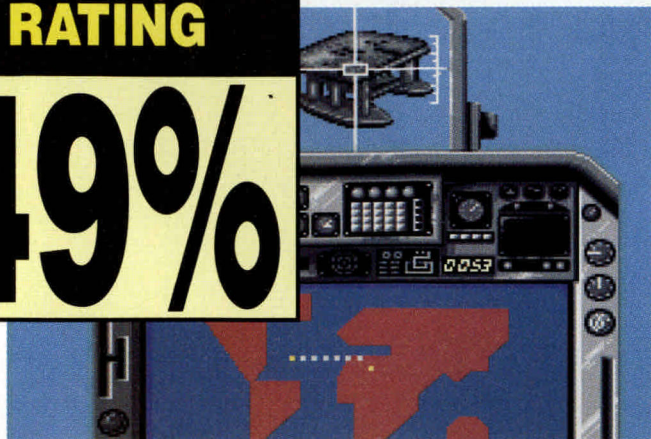
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OVERALL RATING

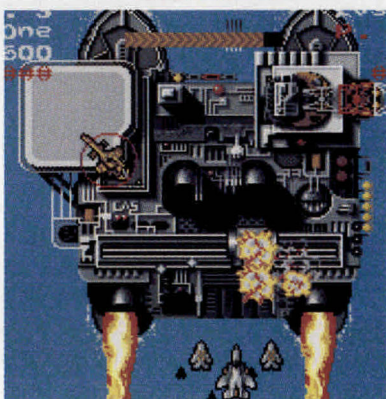
49%



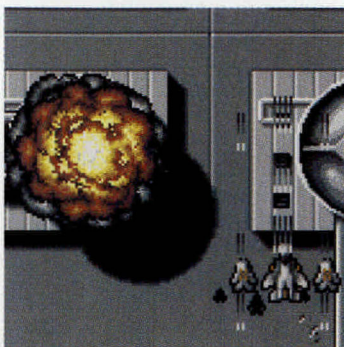
.(Above) Before you embark on each of the missions, you are given an indication of what to expect at the end of the level on this useful map screen.



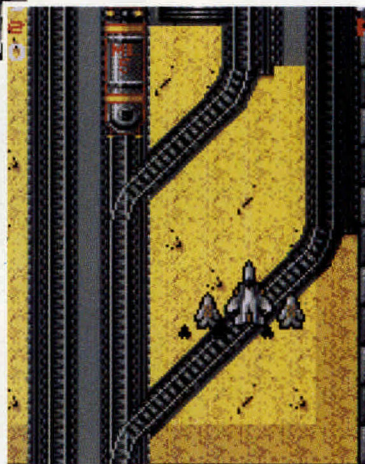
.(Right) The end-of-level strongholds are where the terrorists lurk and, as you approach, they release a number of jets and weapons to attack you. By shooting away their defences (which are represented by a red and black bar at the top of the screen), you eventually whittle away their resistance and the base explodes.



.(Below) The enemy squadrons appear from the top of the screen and make their way down before looping back. Meanwhile tanks and ground-based turrets fire too, doubling the flak you have to avoid.



.(Left & below) The red planes are the key to completing the game. When a wave has been destroyed, they relinquish a red orb which, when collected, adds a small drone to the side of your ship. A number of these can be collected, turning your jet into a formidable blaster.



GRAPHICS

Small, unimpressive sprites crawl their way up against a detailed but bland landscape. The end-of-level guardians add a little interest, but not a lot.

51%

SOUND

Quite a nice intro tune, but the game's spot effects are restricted to tinny and annoying blasting noises.

58%

ALEX

The last time I saw a shoot'em-up as unimpressive as this was when I played *Scramble Spirits*. Like *Grandslam's* game, *Sonic Boom* suffers from 8-bitesque graphics and minimal sound. This would be OK if the gameplay was groundbreaking, but it isn't. The enemy bullets are extremely hard to see against the lighter backdrops, giving the game a hit'n'miss element that proves annoying. A mediocre blast with nothing to recommend about it.

STEVE

When you consider that the Amiga has had superb shoot'em-ups such as *X-Out*, *Turrican* and *Xenon II* written for it, it makes you wonder why games like *Sonic Boom* ever get released. The actual coin-op was no great shakes, but this conversion is even worse. The graphics are dull and bland, and the overall presentation gives the game a substandard 'look'. Gameplaywise, too, *Sonic Boom* pales into insignificance, rounding off a dire shoot'em-up perfectly.

ACTIVISION £19.95

SONIC BOOM

Converted from the relatively unknown Sega coin-op, *Sonic Boom* is a vertically-scrolling shoot'em-up along the lines of *Flying Shark*. A terrorist group have seized control of six of the world's most deadly weapon bases, and are threatening to turn the weapons against their owners unless their demands are met. Time is running out, and trying to bargain with the fanatics has proved fruitless, so a last-ditch solution has been despatched - you. Seated within the confines of the Ministry of Defence's latest jet, you must

run the gauntlet of the terrorists and make your way to each of their six strongholds. However, as well as the main weapon targets, they have also gained control over a number of remote-controlled fighters, tanks and gun turrets, and these have been sent out to destroy you. Control over your jet is via the joystick, with the directional controls manoeuvring it, and the firebutton sending a stream of bullets upscreen. You are also armed with a limited supply of supershots which, when activated with the return key,

obliterate any nearby tanks or planes. Likewise, to make your task slightly easier, by completely destroying a squadron of enemy Red Arrows, a weaponry enhancement icon is granted which, once collected, positions a small drone beside your jet, effectively doubling your firepower. These remain faithfully by your side at all times until hit by an enemy's bullet, and several can be collected. Should your main jet be hit by enemy fire, though, one of your lives will be lost as will any added weaponry.

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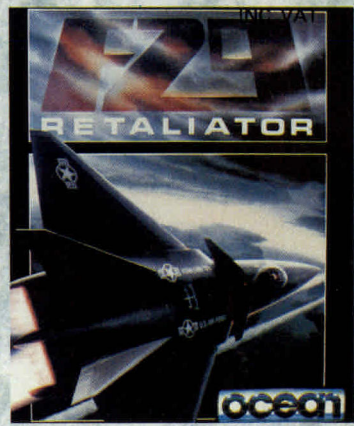
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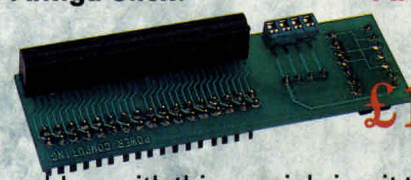
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ALEX

Yeah! This is what we want! In the past, I have found skateboard games, such as Skate Or Die and 720 fun for a while, but ultimately tedious. With Skidz, though, Gremlin have incorporated a really playable game with great graphics and sound. The result is a fast-moving - if a little tricky - romp, with tremendous playability. Everything you could possibly want is here, including two different control systems,

In Core Design's latest game for Gremlin, it seems that even hip'n'happening kids can jump on the ecology bandwagon. Assuming the role of one of these streetwise, ozone-friendly dudes,

GREMLIN £19.99

SKIDZ

you have been sent out on litter patrol, armed with only a skateboard or a BMX as transport. Using whatever skills you have learned, you must perform bunnyhops, endos, and doughnuts as you go about your litter-collecting duties of 'binning' the dropped bottles, newspapers, and Coke cans, along with picking up any other items that may make your job slightly easier - wheel repair kits and food, for instance. In all, there are six

stages to the dirty city, ranging from a walk by the polluted canal to a crumbling and danger-filled building site, and each is full of human and natural hazards that unwittingly hamper your progress. You begin your shift with a brand new board or bike, a limited supply of energy, and an ever-decreasing time-limit. However, as you collect litter whilst the clock ticks away, the aforementioned citizens - who range from frizbee-sliding kids to winos -

SOUND

A choice of music or effects, both of which suit the jaunty nature of the game perfectly.

78%

inadvertently get in your way, inevitably knocking you off and costing you valuable energy. In addition, natural hazards, such as stretches of water, broken bridges, and stray animals, are also energy-sapping worries that are best avoided.

All your actions are displayed on a full-screen, eight-way scrolling play area, with your speedy hero the main centre of attraction. The assorted batches of litter are strewn all over the level, and it is collected by simply

Your Modes Of Transport:

The Bike: The main advantage with the bike is that it can pass through very narrow gaps; however, it is a lot bulkier and seems slightly slower.

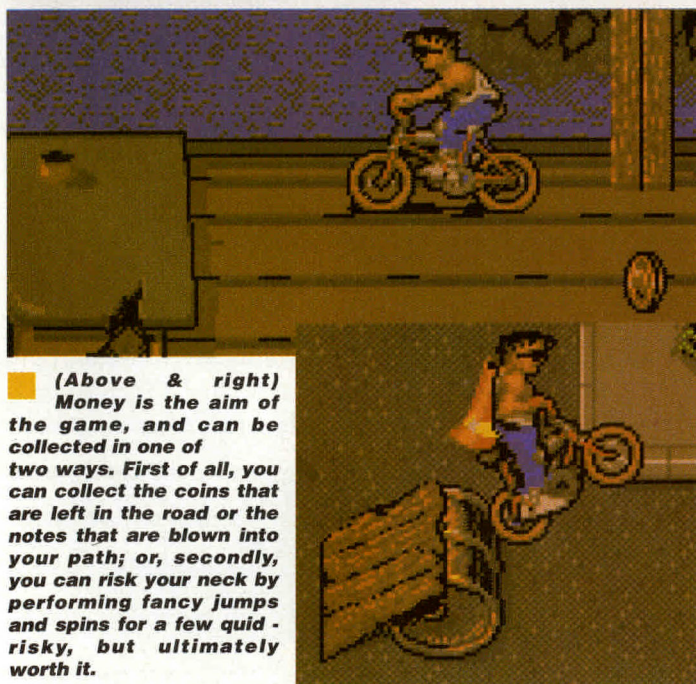


The Skateboard: Although broader than the bike, it is much more manoeuvrable, and can turn on a sixpence. In our opinion, by far the best mode of transport.

You start the game with sixteen energy points, but thanks to the wide range of hazards - which range from dogs chasing cats to large chunks of pipe sticking up - every time you hit the floor, you lose one of your health points. Lose all sixteen and it's 'game over', but luckily the game features a continue option.



(Below) Once you have collected enough money, it's time to buy a few odds and sods for your bike or board. By pressing the spacebar, a status panel details any damage, and entering a shop between levels allows you to buy new wheels, brakes, or even protective pads and helmets.



(Above & right) Money is the aim of the game, and can be collected in one of two ways. First of all, you can collect the coins that are left in the road or the notes that are blown into your path; or, secondly, you can risk your neck by performing fancy jumps and spins for a few quid - risky, but ultimately worth it.

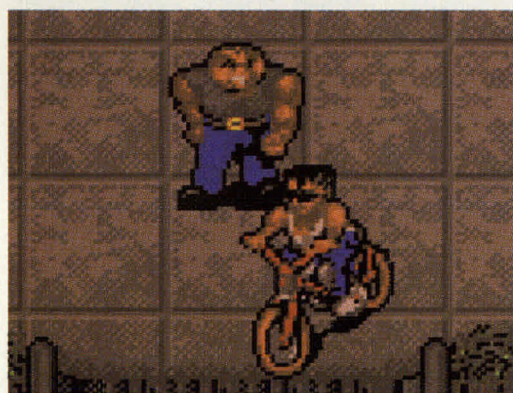


GRAPHICS

The game uses full-screen scrolling, and this gives the impression of a larger, more impressive play area. The backdrops are colourful and varied, and are complemented by the wide range of cartoon-like and well-drawn sprites.

82%

passing over it, and, once collected, it should be taken to one of the many litter bins. Once you have dumped the rubbish into the bin, a percentage will flash up on the screen. Your aim is to collect seventy-five percent of all the rubbish within the level, and make your exit to the next stage via the right-hand side of the level.



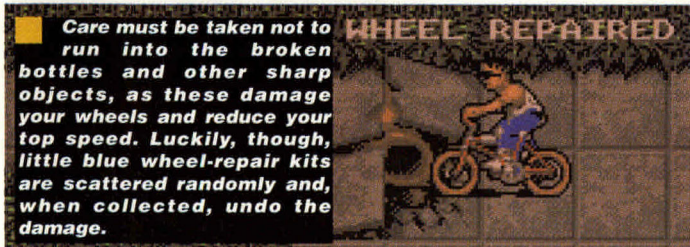
(Left) By far the worst roadside inhabitant is the mugger. As you approach, he walks slowly downwards in an attempt to block your path. Contact with this thug results in all of your money being stolen and you ending up on the floor!



(Above) Each of the six stages has a hidden mission within it. For instance, on the second stage, amongst the litter you will find a fishbowl and collecting this will add a large bonus to your score, but delivering it to its secret destination will double it.



Skidz features two control methods which can be swapped at any time. The first uses the firebutton to build up speed, whilst the second uses repeated moving of the joystick in the required direction. Of the two, the latter is slightly less complex.



Care must be taken not to run into the broken bottles and other sharp objects, as these damage your wheels and reduce your top speed. Luckily, though, little blue wheel-repair kits are scattered randomly and, when collected, undo the damage.

STEVE

Skidz lives up to all of my expectations. The graphics are excellent, with cute, recognisable sprites and excellent backdrops, but it was the gameplay that made it for me. Using the second control method, I picked up the controls straight away and, before long, was performing stunts with the best of them. In addition, as well as the main litter-collecting task, there are smaller missions to be found, and these, along with the practice race, add slightly more to an already playable task. A brilliant game, and one that is highly recommended.

However, time waits for no man, and unless you can collect several of the randomly-placed stopwatches within the level, a grinning cap-wearing skull appears from nowhere and proceeds to eat away your energy.

Once you have succeeded in collecting three-quarters of the level's rubbish, you are taken back to the main menu screen

where one of three options awaits. First of all, you can simply choose to go on to the next stage; or, secondly, you can take part in a practice race, which limbers you up for the big race when you have cleared each of the eight stages. Finally, and probably most importantly, you can enter a bike'n'board shop, from which extras, such as new wheels, safety gear, and first aid kits can be

DOUG

After getting to grips with the controls, I had tremendous fun with Skidz. The graphics make the game instantly appealing, and the various characters, including dogs (who leave unwanted presents in the road!), muggers, and kids are all well-drawn. An unexpected surprise was that choosing either the bike or the skateboard DID actually make a difference. An excellent game, need I say more?

bought, providing you have collected enough money by performing impressive stunts (or simply by finding it) along the way.



AMIGA ACTION

OVERALL RATING

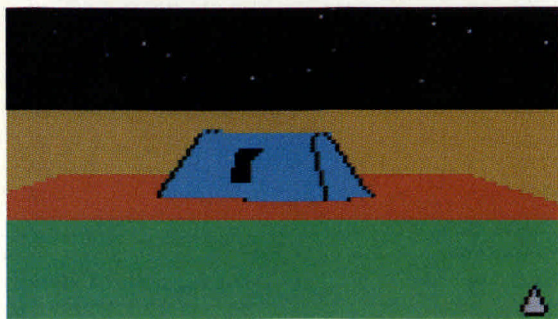
81%



(Above) Take too long to collect the rubbish and a cap-wearing skull attacks and whittles away your energy. He will keep doing this until one of two things happen: either you die, or you collect a stopwatch icon that will get him off your back for a while.



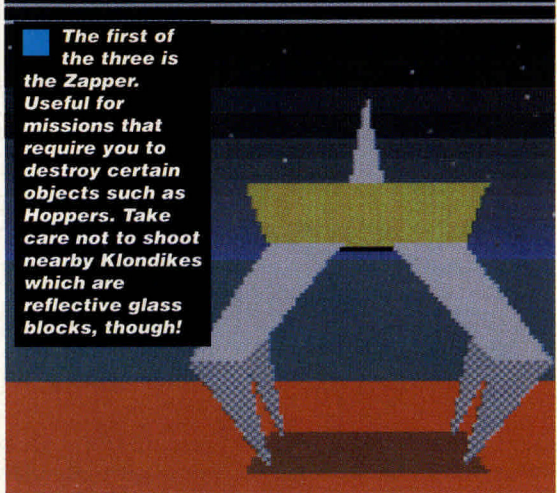
(Left) Each piece of litter knocks roughly one percent off your remaining total. However, it is possible to carry up to ten items, after which you must dump them before any more can be collected.



■ The Klondikes are perhaps the most important objects in the game. Be careful, because they can be destroyed by the laser on your Zapper. Get in close with a Grabber and collect all of them from each tower.

Softly Softly!

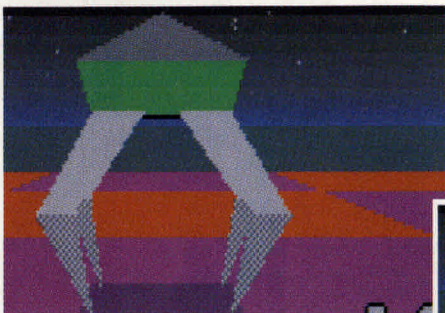
■ The first of the three is the Zapper. Useful for missions that require you to destroy certain objects such as Hoppers. Take care not to shoot nearby Klondikes which are reflective glass blocks, though!



The Sacrifice

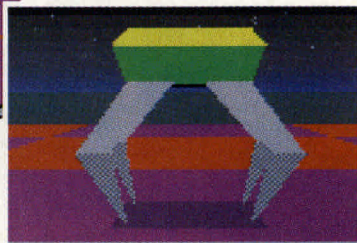


■ The towers can be viewed from each point of the compass, as well as from each separate spider. This allows you to solve hidden puzzles that are on both the standard towers and maybe the ones that you can design yourself using the in-built tower creator!



■ (Above) Second of the lot is the Pusher. Carries a large Repeller beam that can be used to move solid objects that stand in your way, such as proximity mines and solid blocks.

■ (Below) The most important Spider of all - the Grabber. Can be used to collect nearby Klondikes. Can also communicate with various objects such as a freezer, which, in turn, will stop all other items moving.



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TOWER OF BABEL

It all began after the surface of planet Earth was completely flooded and only one place was left for mankind to go - up. Huge towers were built that stretched far into the clouds, and as legend has it, any one able to climb to the peak of a tower would be able to communicate with God himself.

But it didn't work like that. The Zantorian, a race from outer space who cruised around the galaxy in massive space hulks,

noticed these strange buildings and decided to investigate. When they had found out what man was doing they decided to help them in their race to the skies. So, being the helpful sort of race, they donated three spider-robots to aid the humans in their work.

All was fine, that is until a group of workers chose to hate the robots. These workers devised a plot to capture the robots and destroy them. These

ALEX

I have been awaiting Tower of Babel for what seems an eternity. Tower of Babel is a decent strategy game should appeal to the logical thinker. Everything about the game is highly polished and well thought out, from the surprisingly difficult puzzles to excellent vector graphics used throughout the game. A good release that I recommend to anyone that likes a good puzzle.

traps came in the form of towers that had exceedingly tricky puzzles and lethal consequences.

On the other hand, you wanted to aid the robots and help them through each tower. All you have to do is solve the puzzles and make your way to the top - Easy, eh?

Three robots are at your command: a Zapper; a Pusher; and a Grabber. The Zapper obviously shoots things; the pusher moves objects and the grabber can collect the Klondikes which, incidentally, are vital to the game. Each puzzle

GRAPHICS

The landscape used is all 3D filled vector-graphics, and very effective it is, too. The spider-robots under your control are smoothly animated and absolutely bursting with colour, as are the other objects and towerscapes.

68%

SOUND

Not a lot in the sound department, apart from the odd siren and grinding of the lift.

63%

DOUG

Rainbird are coming up with some very good strategy games lately and Tower of Babel is no exception. The solid vector puzzles are very well thought out, and as the game progresses the puzzles get really cryptic. There's not too much sound within the game, but certainly enough to suffice. If Midwinter is the strategy game of the decade, certainly come a close second.

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THEIR FINEST HOUR: BATTLE OF BRITAIN

STEVE

The best thing about Lucasfilm's flight sims is that you can make them as easy or as hard as you wish. However, whereas I found Battlehawks a little too simplistic, the new features added to Their Finest Hour make this their best game since Indy. The graphics are smoother than those in Battlehawks, and, although there are plenty of options, the game isn't particularly difficult to get into, making this a worthy choice for the flight sim novice. There are plenty of missions to sink your teeth into, and control over your chosen plane is extremely easy to pick up, and all these features make Battle Of Britain Lucasfilm's finest yet.

Following in the footsteps of their previous release, Battlehawks 1942, Lucasfilm have released Their Finest Hour: Battle of Britain which simulates the various battles that occurred in the second world war between the British and the Germans. As in Battlehawks 1942, you fly for either side, piloting one of the many planes that were used in the forces. If you fly for the British, you'll be up there with the best of our lot to protect old England. If you are a German, it is more than likely that your mission will be to take out enemy aircraft or bomb strategic ground and sea targets. The history of the Battle of Britain

has been included in the comprehensive manual included with the game, detailing numerous key battles and informing us of the various facts and figures from each side's point of view. You can either dive straight in at the deep end and start with a combat mission or, more sensibly, begin by practising your dogfighting and bombing skills using the trainer. These simulate a standard mission, and allow you to come face to face with enemy aircraft and ground targets, but using the option to be invincible, you can practise all the manoeuvres you want. On the other hand, a combat mission is for real, although you can still become invincible if you so desire. Each aircraft has its own selection of missions, which are usually suited to that type of craft, be it bomber or fighter. Landing is something that is vital to a successful mission, because although on some missions you must take off (a simple task), all missions require you to land at your homebase otherwise the mission won't be up to the expected standard. Both mouse and

joystick can be used as the yoke of your plane, with various buttons on the keyboard operating many other features that the game includes, such as the ability to film the battle and look over your actions from different views after you have landed or even during the sortie. A majority of the missions that the Germans are assigned to include the option to bomb a ground or sea target. This can either be by dive-bombing if piloting a Ju 87 Stuka, or by a bombardier if flying a larger plane with bombs dropped from the bomb-bay. If you are dive-bombing, you'll have to practise to get the hang of dropping the bomb on target and then pulling out of the dive in time. When dropping the bombs from your bomb-bay, you'll look out of the bottom of the aircraft, and if you are flying oncourse, your target should be below you. If you time the dropping of each bomb correctly, you should be able to destroy your target in a single run.

DOUG

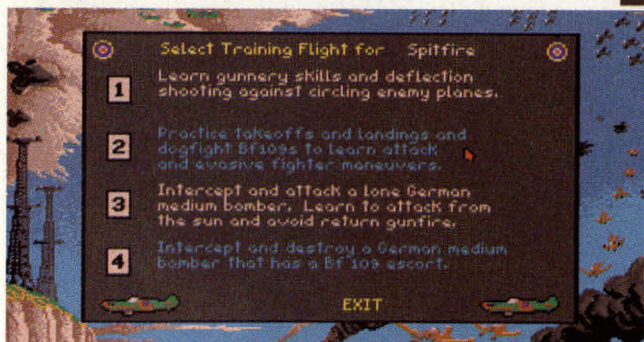
I was a great fan of Battlehawks 1942, so when I heard that Battle of Britain was coming out I couldn't wait, and I'm not the slightest bit disappointed. The graphics are amazing, with a lot of detail on the planes that you will encounter. There's also a lot of different planes and missions to keep you going. Sometimes the enemy don't use very good tactics, but nevertheless the gameplay is still very good and you just keep on wanting one more go. A worthy sequel to Battlehawks.

SOUND

Brilliant sound effects that add to the atmosphere of the game no end. Ranging from the dull thud of shells to the explosion of an enemy plane - everything has been included and is suitably impressive.

69%

(Below) Their Finest Hour: The Battle of Britain has all the options you could wish for in a game of this type. You start off by flying a few training missions to allow you to get to grips with the controls, before venturing into a full-scale campaign!



(Left) There are eight aeroplanes to choose from: two British and six German. The majority of the German forces were bombers, so they shouldn't have much of a chance against the highly-maneuvrable Spitfires, but that's up to you, isn't it?

(Right) The positions of both enemy and friendly objects can be seen on the map, which amongst other things details the distance between you and your target. This also enables you to locate your home base with ease, and that is one of the most important parts of the game.



(Above) Far below is the convoy of ships you must destroy. Over the radio, your Wing Commander tells you to ready yourself for the attack. As you near the ship, flak starts bursting around you in a hail of explosion. You know that one hit from a ship's gun could destroy you, but you continue to dive release your bombs.

The Germans were over-confident when it came to battling the British in the skies - unless of course, you rewrite the history of the Battle of Britain!

ALEX

The Battle of Britain is another classic from Lucasfilm, and along with Battlehawks 1942, adds up to some of the best flight sims on the market. There are a vast number of missions, and once you have completed each mission, it is just as much fun to replay that sortie and try and complete it in a different way. On the whole, Battle of Britain is a definite buy for flight simulator buffs, and in my opinion, this is Lucasfilm Games' finest hour!

GRAPHICS

Both your plane and the enemy's are detailed, making it easy to recognize both friend and foe whilst piloting your craft. The update on the planes is smooth, although the screen does slow down when it becomes busy.

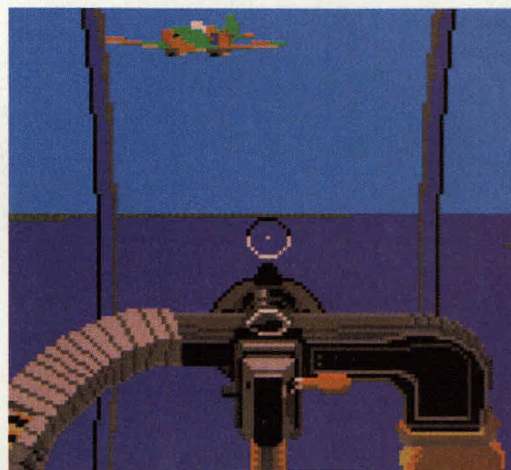
77%

(Below) As in Battlehawks 1942, you can film yourself in action, and replay the film to see how you performed from another viewpoint. This not only adds a bit of fun to the game, but also lets you see where you are going wrong.

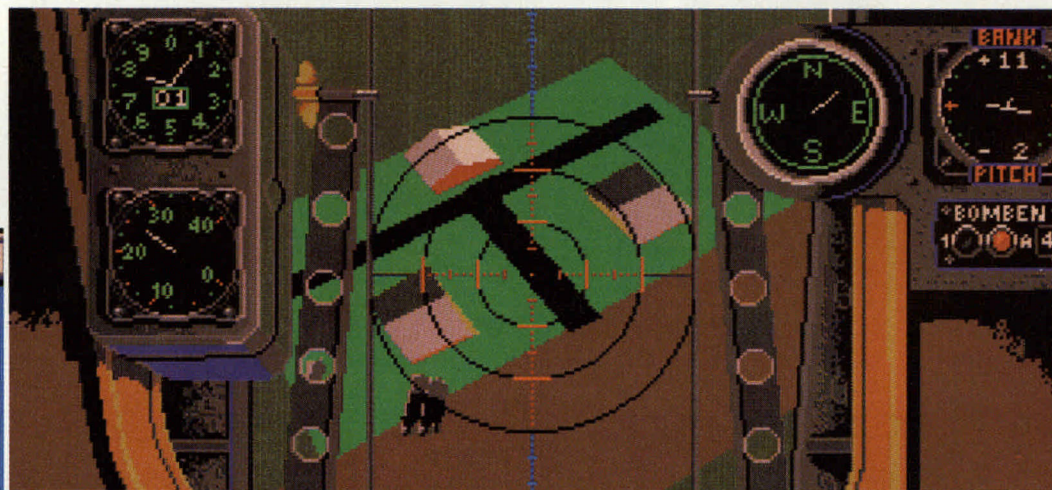
Combat Film Review:



(Above) Another major feature is the chance to have a dogfight with enemy craft. In those days, the aircraft weren't equipped with heat-seeking missiles so you must fly in close and blow them apart with a burst from your cannons.



(Above & below) If the bandits are at six o'clock, you're going to have to turn around if you are flying a single seat fighter, but the bigger bombers have guns that fire in all directions. You can choose to sit in the front gun turret just below the pilot as the opposition comes towards you, or maybe in one of the rear or side gun positions. If the target is on the ground, however, run to the bombardier's position and get ready to drop your load!



You landed in the Channel. The efficient floatplane rescue service spotted your plane going down and arrived to rescue you.



Your Mission Score: 0

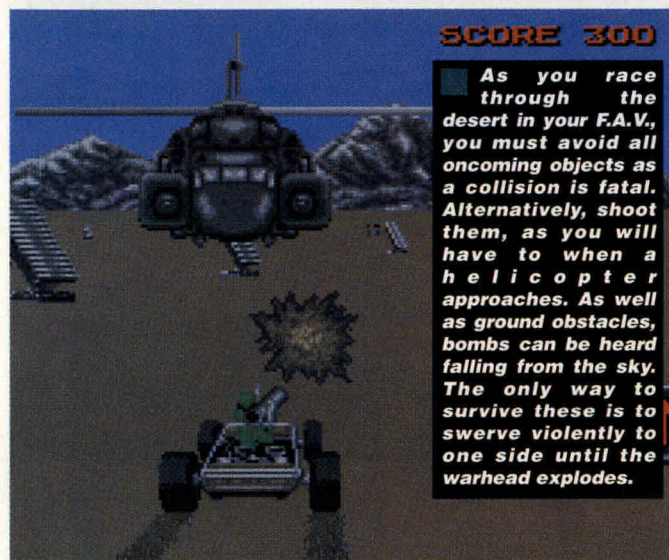
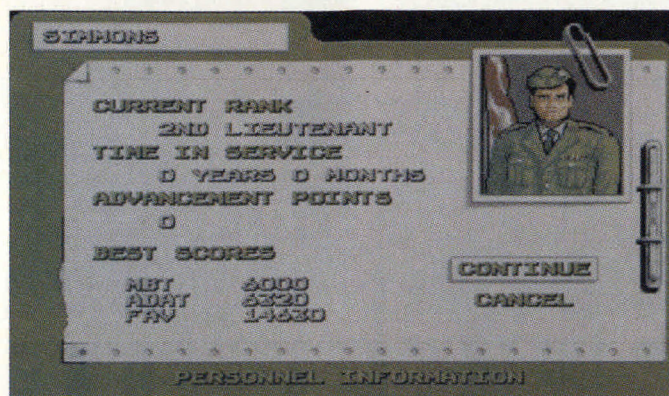
(Above) After each sortie, a brief message informs you of the success or failure of your previous mission, detailing the losses of each side, as well as telling you if you managed to return to your base or if you crashed into enemy territory. I know where I'd rather be!

AMIGA ACTION

OVERALL RATING

81%

When you start *Heavy Metal*, you'll have the rank of a lowly cadet. To progress, you must practise on each of the three vehicles enough to allow you to earn the rank of 2nd Lieutenant, or even higher!



As you race through the desert in your F.A.V., you must avoid all oncoming objects as a collision is fatal. Alternatively, shoot them, as you will have to when a helicopter approaches. As well as ground obstacles, bombs can be heard falling from the sky. The only way to survive these is to swerve violently to one side until the warhead explodes.

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HEAVY METAL

Heavy Metal is based around the U.S. Army, or to be precise, three of their latest military hardware: the M1 Abrams MBT; the Fast Attack Vehicle; and lastly, an A.D.A.T.'s air defence system. *Heavy Metal* allows you to climb in and take control of each one of these machines. To begin with, you'll only be allowed to train until you become proficient in the use of all three; after that, anything is possible.

The first vehicle to practise in is the M1 Abrams. Known for its tremendous firepower and state-of-the-art interior gadgets, it may take a while to get the hang of the controls. It is possible to sit in both the driver's and gunner's seats, although you'll probably find yourself arming the gun for the majority of the game. Each target is highlighted, and a smaller, more detailed picture of the current enemy position is

STEVE

A strange selection of tank games, *Heavy metal* fails to impress on virtually all counts. Although the three sub-games offer good variety, they are all poor in their execution and have minimal playability. The game also suffers from 8-bitesque graphics, which include Fast Attack Vehicles that float out of nowhere, and a tedious Battlezone-style game that desperately wants to be a tank sim. A terrible mish-mash of terrible games that is best avoided.



The U.S.'s M1 Abrams is a first-rate tank. On the horizon, the enemy advances, and in the same vein as *Battlezone*, you must destroy them before they do the same to you.



The tactical map enables you plan your next move. You can send in your strongest force in the hope of them taking the enemy out on their own, or you can join in if you wish!

Your only defence against the enemy MIGs, is the A.D.A.T. The cannons can be used to take out both ground and air targets, but the missiles, operated by using the right-hand mouse button, can only be used to take out fighter aircraft. You must be constantly on the move, because it only takes a couple of shots to take out an expensive piece of equipment.



ALEX

Heavy Metal is one of those games that looks stunning on the outside, but once played, the person who paid twenty quid feels like strangling the people behind it! The game is graphically nice, but I'm afraid the good points end there. Both sections are quite playable, but the M.B.T. section is poor. *Heavy Metal* is one that should be avoided, due to lack of variety and gameplay.

shown at the top.

Next is the F.A.V. Driving this is easy, as it only requires you to steer and fire. As you progress, you must either blast or avoid the on-coming objects, otherwise one of your starting quota of buggies will be lost.

The A.D.A.T. system is simple as well, using either mouse or joystick to shoot at both ground and air targets. The right mouse button operates the missiles when you have a lock on the oncoming target. Once all three have been practised to a suitable standard, you can enter

GRAPHICS

Each level has a different screen layout, and although the tanks' interiors are detailed, the same cannot be said for the play area.

41%

SOUND

Apart from the military drum beat while it waits for your selection of vehicle, there are only a few bangs and rat-a-tat-tats to keep you amused.

50%

the real thing. This enables you to decide where you will head the attack. A map detailed the surrounding area, pin-pointing both your own and the enemy's units. Send your platoons off to engage the enemy, before jumping into yet another piece of fine military equipment!

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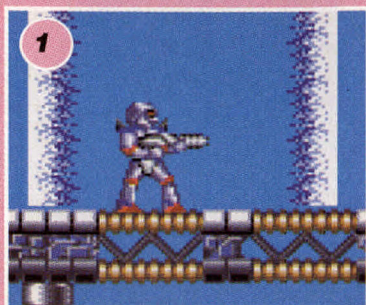
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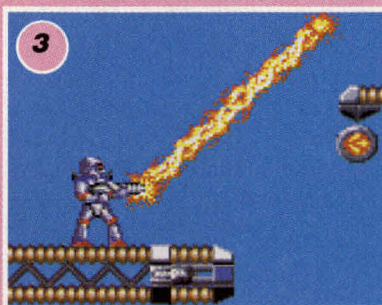
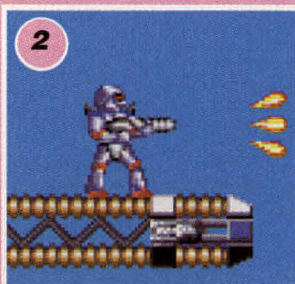
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Turrican is armed with a number of powerful weaponry systems, each of which are upgradable. However, should a life be lost, the last upgrades you collected will be taken away.



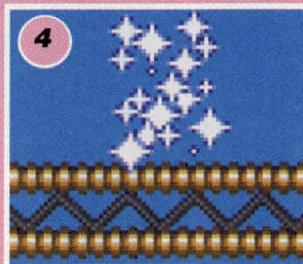
1. Smart bombs destroy or severely weaken any of Morgul's allies who are on-screen. You are given three smart bombs with every life, and they are brought into action by pressing the spacebar.

2. Initially, your trusty laser fires a single stream of bullets, but, by collecting enhancement icons, you can upgrade it to a five-way-firing blunderbuss or an extremely powerful laser.

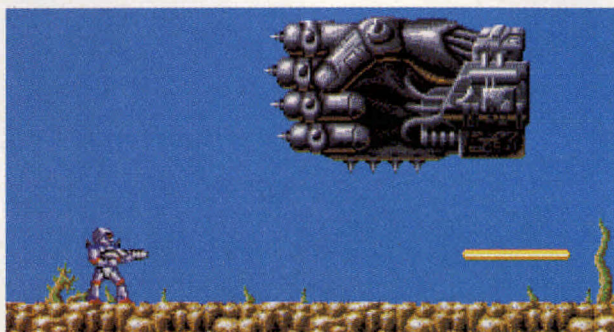


3. Secreted within your laser is a manoeuvrable laser/flame-thrower which is activated by holding down the firebutton. This, too, can be upgraded, with the extra icons extending its range of devastation.

4. Protection against the enemy forces comes in the form of your trusty shield suit. However, whilst it can take quite a bit of damage, collecting a sparkling shield icon renders you temporarily invulnerable.



■ Due to his bulky armour, there are some tight spots that Turrican cannot pass. To combat this, though, his suit has the ability to transform into a small gyroscope that can squeeze through the smallest gaps.



■ (Left) Each stage is guarded by a huge end-of-level guardian who must be destroyed before you can proceed. Graphically, these are fairly similar to those in the ageing Rainbow Arts shoot'em-up, Denaris, only this time they are tougher to destroy and may require a number of smart bombs before they eventually give up the ghost.

STEVE

X-Out was a classy blast, but Turrican just blows it away. Set over a vast play area, there is just so much to see and do that it's incredible. Drawing the best ideas from games ranging from Soldier Of Light to Giana Sisters, Turrican is a non-stop blast of immense proportions. The graphics are nothing short of brilliant, with a large cast of well-drawn nasties, and the animation on your main character is just as impressive. Thanks to its large map, there are literally hundreds of hidden bonuses and features, and these add to the game immensely. This really is how a shoot'em-up should be and deserves to be in your collection. Superb.

RAINBOW ARTS £19.95

TURRICAN

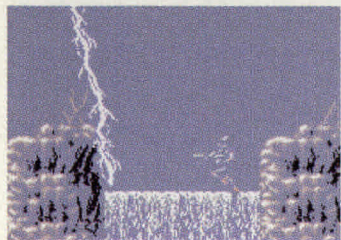
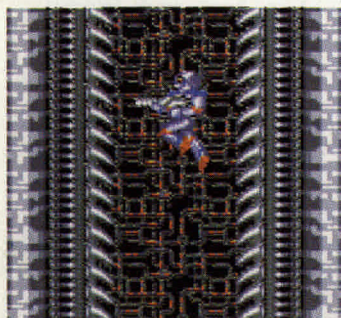
"Sleep, those little slices of death, how I hate them." Edgar Allen Poe's vision of slumber has been proved truer than ever in Rainbow Art's massive follow-up to X-Out. Long, long ago, an evil three-headed warlock known as Morgul had your world at its knees by turning the planet's population into gibbering wrecks with his inventive nightmares. A dangerous precedent to the cinema's Freddy Krueger, Morgul could plant dreams into sleeping peoples' minds, and used his awesome power to reduce their resistance - his ultimate aim being to overthrow the planet's rulers

and secure their power for his own evil needs. However, a lone warrior, Devolon, had played Morlon at his own game and eventually banished the dream demon to an empty dimension where he could do no harm. Consequently, as a safeguard, dreaming was banned and all was quiet. That is, until now...

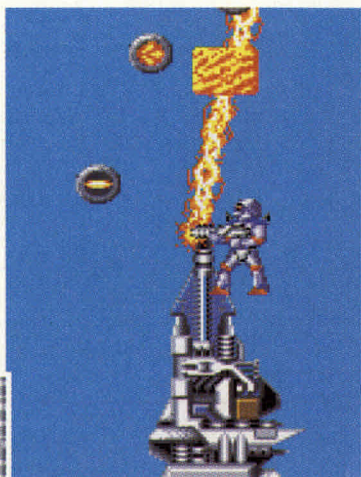
As the nightmares spread again and panic ensued, another lone warrior was selected to follow in Devolon's footsteps and, hopefully, end his menace for ever. As you may have expected, you are that lone warrior, the Turrican of the title, and your

quest for a confrontation with Morgul will see you battling through five worlds and some ten levels of scrolling action as you battle through the three-headed tyrant's defences. The game is an eight-way scroller which draws its inspiration from the likes of Soldier of Light, Blood Money, and any other platform games and shoot'em-ups you care to recall. Each of the planets is inhabited by a large army of Morgul's deadly followers, and to deal with them you have been given a wide selection of weapons and abilities. Clad in a bulky armoured suit, you can withstand a

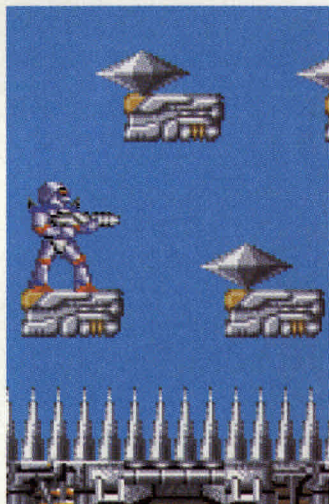
■ (Right) *Turrican* plagiarises ideas from a whole host of games, including - somewhat surprisingly for a shoot'em-up - *Great Giana Sisters*. Within each stage, there are dozens of secret bonuses to be collected, and the majority of them are invisible until they are shot. Once they appear, repeated shooting causes them to relinquish both useful weapon enhancements and extra lives.



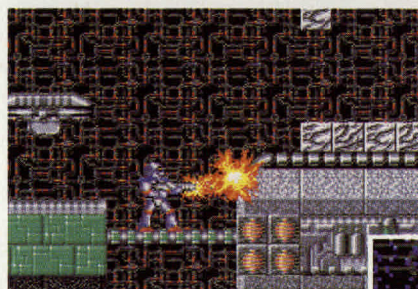
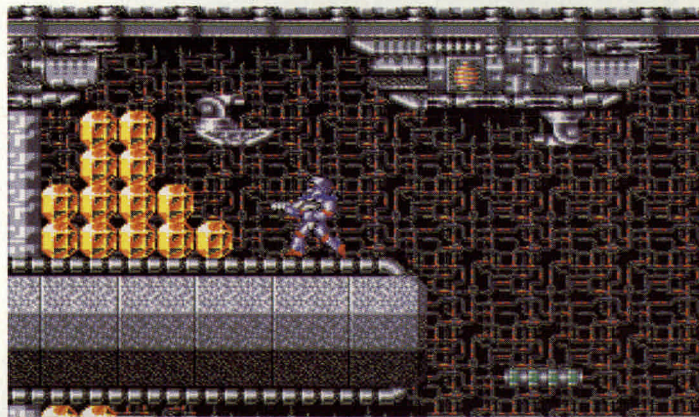
■ (Above & right) Your suit can stand up to a number of direct hits from the enemy, but other natural and enemy-placed hazards aren't quite so lenient. The planets are littered with deadly jutting spikes that kill you almost instantly, and, whilst travelling underground, even the weather takes an immediate dislike to you!



■ (Left) The different planets within the game, are made up of various shoot'em-up ideas, ranging from the exploration onus of the first stage, to the jet-pack-based scrolling antics as you fly towards Morgul's lair.

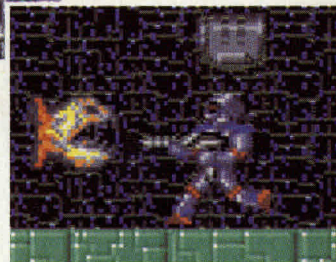


■ (Below) Along the way, our hero can boost his score by collecting the gems that are hidden away. In addition, a secret bonus is yours if you manage to collect three-hundred of them, in which case you are granted a useful 'continue' system when you run out of lives.



■ (Above) Some areas seem impassable at first, but most obstacles can be blown away using your revolving laser. On later stages, you may find that the bricks you are trying to destroy throw themselves at you.

■ (Below) As well as underground and in the air, your adventures will take you underwater. Inhabited by a larger variant of our *Piranha* fish, though, it isn't wise to stay in there for too long!



GRAPHICS

Surprisingly good all the way through; each of the sprites is superbly drawn - incredible when you consider how big the game is. The background graphics are excellent with good combinations of bas-relief and rocks, and the main sprite is flexible and well animated.

86%

predetermined number of hits, and, in addition, it also allows you to transform yourself into a speedy gyroscope that proves invaluable for passing through smaller gaps you otherwise could not. Likewise, to protect yourself, a number of useful weapons are at your disposal. First of all, there is your trusty laser which is sparked into action with a press of

SOUND

As well as the impressive sound effects, the game features a number of different tunes to accompany the relevant action. For instance, when you come up against a fish-like guardian, the *Jaws* theme plays - brilliant.

76%

the firebutton, and kills most of the enemies instantly, but should any prove to be more resilient, holding down the firebutton ignites a manoeuvrable laser beam that wipes out anything it touches. Finally, you are also given a limited supply of smart bombs, and these clear the screen of any nasties whenever the space bar is pressed.

As well as the hordes of robots, spiked pits and natural

ALEX

After the release of the superb, *X Out*, *Rainbow Arts* have come up with another corker, this time called *Turrican*. Once again, it is a shoot 'em-up, but you control a man that can leap across abysses and destroy huge mechanical fists. The power-ups are numerous, and at times it can be seen that hints of other games have been included, but this doesn't detract from the overall appeal - quite the opposite in fact. The best platform shoot 'em-up I've seen in a long time.

hazards you have to contend with, Morgul has placed a massive guardian at the exit from each planet. As soon as you appear, these spring into action and attempt to sap your energy and part you with

DOUG

Although *Turrican* seems to have everything going for it on the graphics and sound side, the game still seemed to be lacking in something to make it really enjoyable. There's a good supply of nasties to destroy, and you've also got the various different weapons to play around with, but there's something missing. As shoot'em-ups go, *Turrican* is not bad, and might appeal to you.

any remaining lives, but, in the true spirit of shoot'em-ups, providing you can pump enough shots into them to weaken their defences, you may stand a chance of destroying them, thus taking you ever closer to your stand-off with the evil three-headed dream demon.

AMIGA ACTION

OVERALL RATING

83%

INFOGRAMES £19.95

JUMPING JACKSON

Imagine a world where there is no music. A world where the

STEVE

Jumping Jackson is appealing, thanks to its colourful graphics and sound, but I feel that this appeal may be limited due to its repetitive gameplay. Whilst avoiding the cutesy musical instruments and collecting various goodies proves initially compelling, I found my interest waning. It's a pity that more wasn't added to the game, as what is there is excellent, but, as it stands, I can only recommend this for the younger.

(Below) The tiles Jack must match for colour are grouped together all over the levels, and, when bounced on, they follow a set pattern until they change to the colour you need. Once all of the tiles have been matched, the record then magically appears



(Above & right) The deadly instruments that roam the screen range from big drums to trumpets, and they follow our hero's every move. However, by standing on either a record deck or a chequered square, you can freeze their progress, giving you valuable seconds in which to think out your next move. However, if they touch you, a fight ensues - a fight you always lose.

names, David Bowie, Kylie Minogue and Jason Donovan mean nothing to the jaded people who live there (it sounds great to me!). Well, according to Infogrames, such a place does exist, and it is up to you, as the titular character, to add a little spice to a planet dominated by classical music. The world that Jumping Jack Son must re-educate is made up of sixteen tiled levels in which are located a number of coloured squares and corresponding record

SOUND

As Jack collects the records, the superb in-game tunes are added by instrument, and are nothing short of brilliant.

82%

decks. Controlling Jack using the joystick, you must bounce him around the scrolling levels, creating records to play on the decks by changing the multi-coloured squares so that they are all the same colour. There are a number of record players per level, and a level is completed once every one has a disk spinning on it. However, just to make your task a little harder,

DOUG

At first sight Jumping Jackson looks a very boring game, but it's only when you start playing it that you realize how good it is. The most outstanding feature is its sound which is brilliant and some of the best I've heard for a long time. The game is good, and the idea of having to complete a special challenge section to get a password for the game is a great idea. Certainly a game worth recommending.

GRAPHICS

Bright and jolly, the graphics suit the bouncy nature of the game perfectly. Jack is cute, and the enemy nasties are instantly recognisable and well drawn.

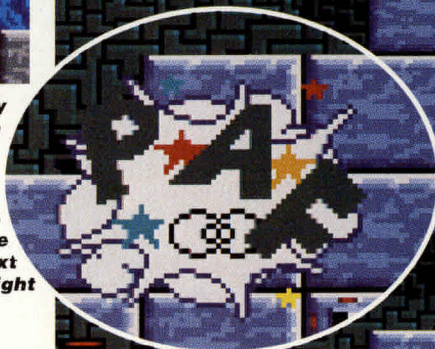
72%

on later levels musical instruments start to dog your every move and must be avoided on pain of death. In addition, to both help and hinder, extra items are frequently added to each level, and range from bottles of bonus-giving Coke and music notes to immunity-giving leather jackets, whilst to assist in easy access, teleporters are scattered throughout the levels - but care must be taken when using these, as the roaming instruments can use them too. Waiting at the end of the sixteen stages of colourful chaos is the key to bringing rock'n'roll back to the classical-dominated world - a limited edition Elvis record - but whether you'll get to it is another story!



(Above) Collecting records and taking them to the record players can be a long-winded task, so it is useful if Jack can collect a jukebox icon. Once added to his inventory, these will then allow him to carry more than one record at a time.

The teleport squares are used to get to the smaller islands where coloured tiles may be situated. But care must be taken, as the enemy instruments can use them too, and may corner you within the confined space.



OVERALL RATING

71%

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ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE ROBOT MONSTERS

(In a deep voice) 'Hi there, my name's Duke, and he's Jake. We're Super Heroes. No, don't applaud just yet, wait till you hear what we do! Yer' see, we go round with big guns and nuke the

enemy from the face of existence. Good, eh? We also carry grenades, which are handy for them encounters when a thermo-nuclear-tipped shell is just not powerful enough!

Jake and I are on our latest escapade, but we've run into a little bit of trouble. This is how it is: We were casually clearing Planet X and searching for Sarah Bellum, when we came across the REPTILONS (Aargh!). Huge lizards that can only be destroyed by continuous shooting and bombing - my kinda' fun! Any way, these Reptilons were taking

over Planet X, sending out robots to turn the survivors into Robo-Zombies...

Your mission is simply to rescue the remaining survivors and retrieve Professor Sarah Bellum. Escape from the Planet of the Robot Monsters is a two-player 3D isometric shoot 'em-up in which you and one other can play the parts of Jake and Duke, the heroes of this game. Each equipped with a supply of grenades and a portable cannon, you must rescue as many survivors as you can, and at the same time, make your way to the top of each stage, via ladders and escalators, where you will eventually come across a 'Port-O-Matic' which will allow you to exit the level.

The game's play area is detailed by a map which shows what will occur next, be it a standard factory level of an attack on a mighty Reptilon. To gain access to the next level, Jake and Duke must jump into a couple of Cyber Sleds and negotiate the

maze which leads to the entrance of the next factory, and to a whole host of other lethal enemies.

After every fourth level there is a Reptilon. The best line of offence against these overgrown lizards is to use your bombs, and just as luck would have it, you can find them in plentiful supply nearby.

As mentioned before, you must find the teleporters to gain access to the next level. This is done via a network of escalators and stairs. The ladders are easily climbed, but the escalators must be activated before you can proceed. This is done by flicking the 'power' switch - a large lever which makes the lights flicker when moved.

Ground obstacles such as spikes and 'live' wire must also be avoided, otherwise your character could come to a rather messy, although humorous, end. Extra bombs and other useful equipment can be found amongst the ship's lockers, but other large containers looking very similar

STEVE

It was the comic book scenario that first attracted me to Robot Monsters, but it was the gameplay and sense of humour that kept me playing. Everything from the coin-op has been incorporated, and there are so many nice touches - the impalings, falling off the edge of a building, etc. - that they almost put you off your main objective. Graphically and sonically, the game is a spot-on conversion, but I don't seem to remember the coin-op being as hard. Domark's best conversion yet.

DOUG

Robot Monsters is the best arcade conversion I've seen for a long time. The graphics and sound are very good, and really add to the game - especially the little things like falling off ledges and bumping into walls. The game is easy to get into and great fun to play; however, you do get a lot of credits and this tends to make the game slightly too easy - perhaps they should have only given you five instead of nine. All that said, it's still a very good game, and worth a look.

SOUND

A number of tunes play throughout the game, and are all well produced, but get a little irritating after a while.

74%

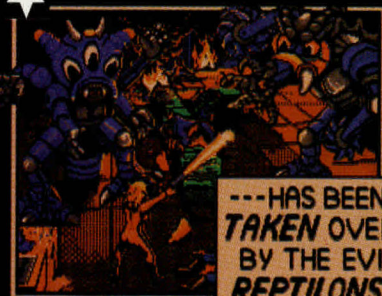
SOMEWHERE IN THE GALAXY



YOU HAVE BEEN SELECTED AS A MEMBER OF AN INTERPLANETARY SWAT TEAM!



PLANET X. A SYNTHETIC INDUSTRIAL PLANETOID---



---HAS BEEN TAKEN OVER BY THE EVIL REPTILONS!



THE REPTILONS HAVE ENSLAVED THE HUMANS STATIONED THERE.



THEY ARE BEING FORCED TO CREATE AN EVIL ROBOT ARMY DESTINED TO DESTROY EARTH!

We meet our heroes, Duke and Jake, in the briefing room. The Commander explains the mission with little detail, but they know what to do: rescue the remaining survivors and Sarah Bellum before they are turned into Robo-Zombies!

contain Robo-Zombies: run away from them otherwise they will home in on you.

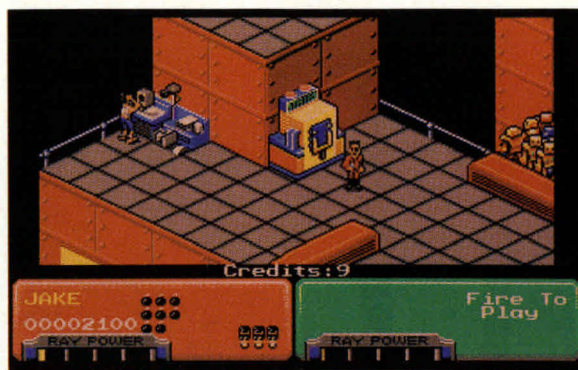
ALEX

I wasn't sure about *Escape from the Planet of the Robot Monsters* (Phew!) because too many isometric games have failed to impress, but *Robot Monsters* is a brilliant conversion of a decent arcade game. Not only does it offer fast, furious and addictive blasting but it also requires some thinking before the task is complete. *Robot Monsters* deserves to do well, and raises Domark even further in my estimation. Superb!

GRAPHICS

Colourful isometric play area which is absolutely buzzing with activity. The sprites, although small, are well animated. The cartoons that appear whilst loading are both well drawn and effective, and set the scene for the forthcoming slaughter!

80%



(Above & right) As the song goes, the only way is up, and this is true to the game. By using the ladders and escalators available, you must make your way up to the teleporter. To operate the escalators, you must first turn on the power by flicking a nearby lever, thereby allowing you to progress to the next stage.

OVERALL RATING

78%



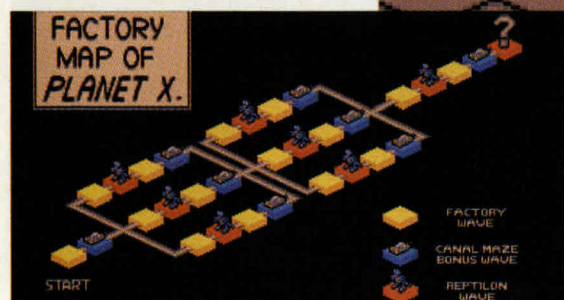
(Left) Your mission is to rescue as many hostages as you can. Most of them can be found working at nearby machinery, and all you have to do is touch them to beam them back aboard your ship, but I doubt that the robot guards will just let you stroll up and take the prisoners, will they?



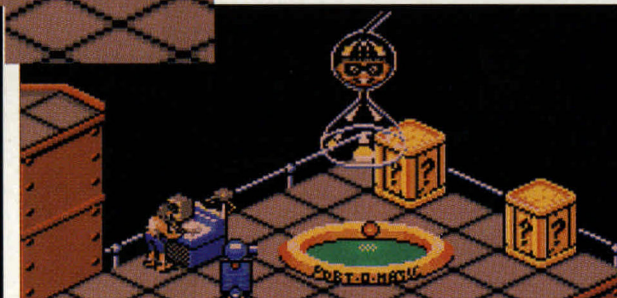
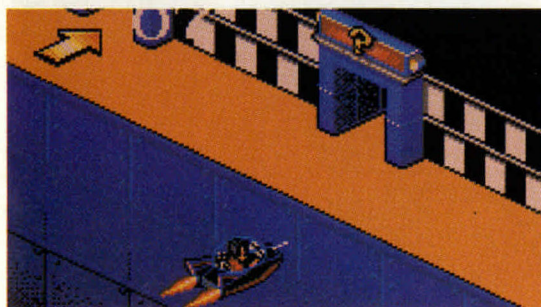
(Right) You are awarded with both points and life-force at the end of each factory level, and the amount you receive depends on the number of hostages saved.



(Left) Bombs play a vital part in *Robot Monsters*, and as they are in limited supply, you must restock by breaking into the ship's lockers. Once open, they reveal all manner of valuable equipment, ranging from energy-replenishing food to the ever-useful invulnerability.



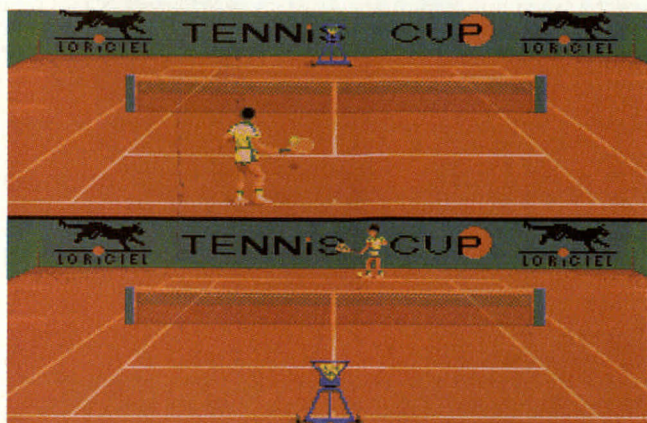
(Below) There is also a bonus sub-game that not only awards you with extra points, but also plays a part in the game. As you jump into your Cyber Sled, you must negotiate the oncoming maze and find one of the three exits in a measly thirty seconds.



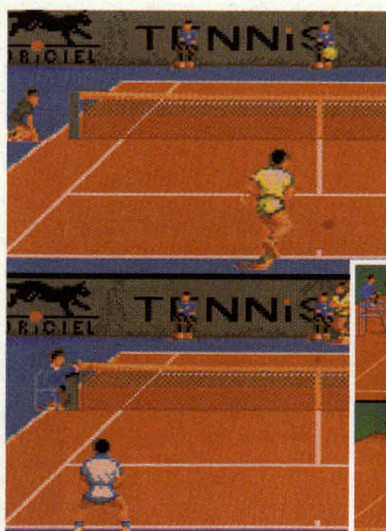
The 'Port-O-Matic' allows you to gain access to later levels. Situated at the top of each factory is one of these handy teleporters, and all you have to do is step inside to take a ride.



(Left) You are warned about the Reptilon that you are about to face, so you can collect the bombs in the area. As you step into a large room, the doors close and you are now at the point of no return. As you edge forward a large Reptilon leaps towards you. You must throw all of your bombs to kill him, and at the same time, avoid his feet. If he still doesn't die, you'll have to use your lasers and waste credits to gain more bombs!



As the saying goes, practice makes perfect, and using the in-game trainer, you can hopefully improve on any of your weak shots. The shots that you can practise are: base-line shots, volleys and the smash.



(Left & below) There are four surfaces that can be played on when playing an exhibition game, and these are: grass, clay, indoors and a hard court. Each has its own effect on the ball's bounce, which can make one surface a little harder or easier to play on, depending on your preference.

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TENNIS CUP

ALEX

The only other decent tennis simulation on the Amiga is UBIsoft's Pro Tennis Tour, but Loriciel's Tennis Cup is far superior in terms of both graphics and sound, as well as the all-important feature of gameplay. Tennis Cup is amazingly addictive, and I'm sure that someone that doesn't enjoy tennis will love Tennis Cup. As a whole, Tennis Cup is THE best sports sim that I have seen so far this year, and as regards addictiveness, it almost beats the likes of Kick Off and Speedball. Superb!

The dew glistens in the morning sun. You peer out of your plush hotel window and stare down at your working place for the day. Each of the numerous courts are covered with vast sheets of polythene, just waiting to be pulled off so the grass underneath can once again see the light of day. Around the streets you can see crowds beginning to form in the streets of Wimbledon, eagerly awaiting the forthcoming match on the centre court.

It's a hard life when you find that you are training out on the courts for the majority of your time. Thankfully, Tennis Cup does not portray the physical and mental strain, just a plain old game of tennis. Open to you are a vast number of moves, all of which can be called up by moving the joystick in a certain direction.

Either singles or doubles can be played, with one or two human players on the same or opposite sides. Three ball speeds have been included: high, medium and low. Training plays an important part in climbing the long ladder to success, and the more you progress in the championships, the greater variety of moves you will have to use.

Not only can you play on famous courts like Wimbledon, but if you are only playing an exhibition match, you can also play on grass or clay surfaces, each affecting the ball differently. There are also a couple of indoor courts to select, too.

Tennis Cup has a lot of options allowing you to change the game to suit your play, but some people want to forget the complexities and just play. It will take a few games to learn the vast number of controls available through your joystick, but once mastered, you'll be astounded at some of the shots you manage to pull off!

You usually serve first. This requires the player to tap the button, therefore making the character throw the ball into the air. From now on, joystick movements only are needed. To make the ball fly over the net without swerving, you leave the joystick alone, otherwise you hold the joystick in the direction

STEVE

In terms of both realism and playability, Tennis Cup wipes the floor with both Passing Shot and Pro Tennis Tour. Practically every move performed by a pro is available - with the exception of the 'oops, I've fallen over, but still hit it' - and all are easily accessible from the joystick. In addition, with the neat use of a split-screen view, the game can be played by one or two players, and, unusually, the one-player game plays just as well as the two-player. Without a doubt, Tennis Cup is the Kick Off of tennis games and is most certainly worth a purchase.

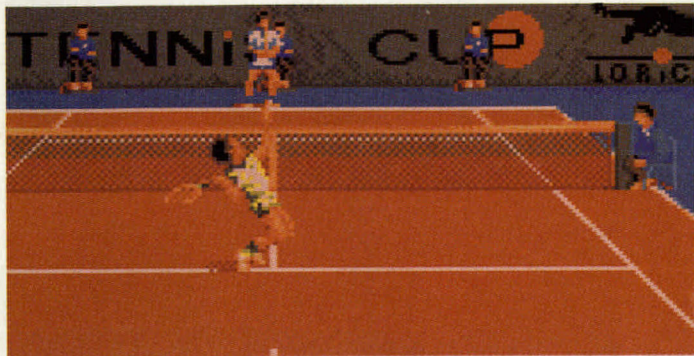
Each man is divided up into different statistics based on a percentage, and with the in-built edit mode, you can change your player. As well as this, you can choose your nationality and change your name. I think Boris sounds good, don't you?

NAME	BORIS
ATP RANKING	33
NATION	WEST-GERMANY
SERVICE	55%
FOREHAND	53%
BACKHAND	52%
FOREHAND VOLLEY	57%
BACKHAND VOLLEY	51%
SMASH	60%
CREDITS	02
LOAD	SAVE
CONTINUE	

Before each game, it is customary to stand to attention when your country's national anthem is being played, but when your opponent's comes on, it is more than likely you'll show no respect and stand there with your hands in your pockets!



■ (Below & right) Both singles and doubles can be played in *Tennis Cup*, with either one or two human contestants playing at the same time. When playing doubles with a friend, you'll be on the same side as each other instead of opposing one another. This can make life a little easier for the two of you, but when playing a singles match, you must use your skill to the full because you don't have a team-mate to rely on!



you want it to go. Sounds easy, eh? But don't forget you have to time your serve correctly. If you manage to return a service, you'll have to use the same principle for your returning shots, which can be anything from net-play to lobs and even a mighty smash!

DOUG

quite a bit to offer. The graphics and sound are very good, and the gameplay really is something else. A two-player, head-to-head option is also available and this, in my opinion, puts the game well ahead of any previous tennis games. All of the shots are easy to implement, and coupled with an intelligent computer-controlled player, this makes *Tennis Cup* a winner in my books. Quite simply the best Tennis game yet.

GRAPHICS

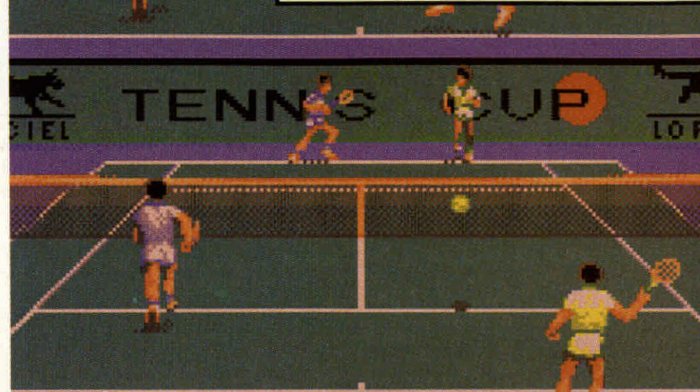
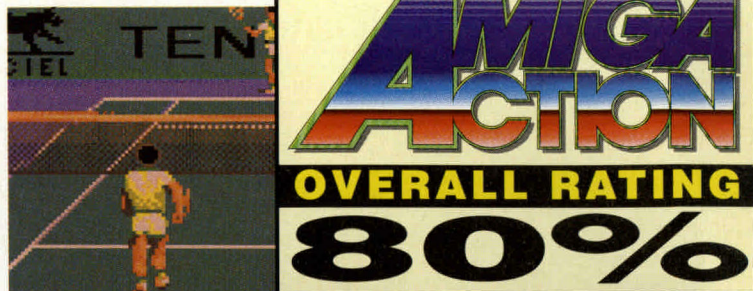
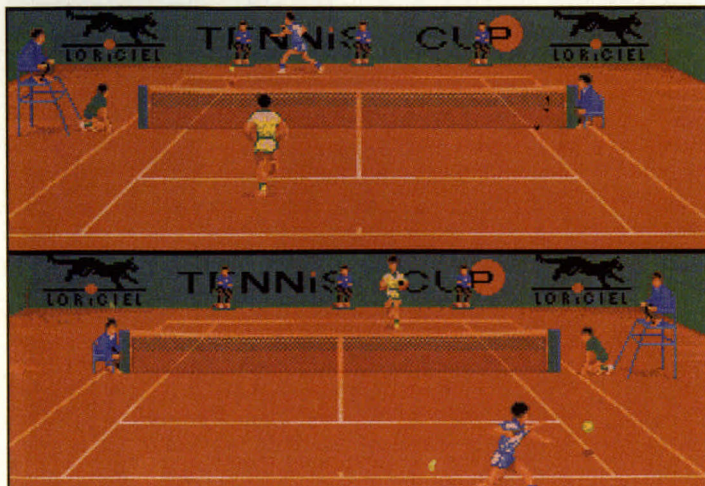
Highly detailed sprites and backdrops that are animated extremely well. The scrolling of the court is a little on the jerky side, but the overall effect - especially the variation of the courts - is very impressive indeed.

77%

SOUND

Pleasant loading tune and sampled speech, with stunningly realistic sound effects as the player groans and smashes the ball into the opponent's half of the court! Overall, probably the best you could have expected.

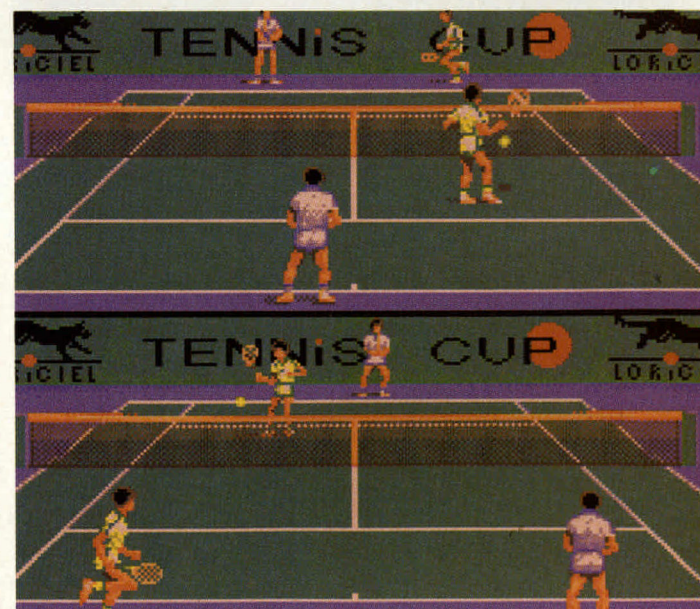
73%



■ (Right) Each game begins with you serving, and you may find it takes a while to get the hang of it. The idea is to throw the ball in the air by tapping the button, and then swerve the ball into your opponent's half by moving the joystick in the required direction. Easy, or what!



■ (Below) When playing a doubles match, decent net play is essential if you are going to win. It is best to stay close to the net and roughly near the centre. This leaves your options open, and if you're quick enough, you should be able to return any shot that is returned.



■ (Right) Making a shot go in the correct direction is probably the hardest thing to get the hang of. First of all, time your return correctly, then at the last moment, hold it in the desired direction and, voila!



(Above) The menu screen lets you choose what type of game to play, be it practice for the beginner, or maybe match-play for a tough opponent. Either way, you will also have to select the weather conditions, thus determining the difficulty of your game.



There are seventeen clubs to choose from, but sadly you can only take fourteen of them due to their sheer bulk. It is recommended that you take all except the 2, 4 and 5 woods, the others giving you a wide choice of different power clubs.



By clicking on the 'info' menu, you can find out the distance that the hole is from you. It also lets you see the wind speed and weather conditions, which all helps to make life a little easier.



The overhead map is an essential if you are to plan your shots correctly, because it allows you to look around the course to see hidden obstacles, thus giving you the chance to avoid them.

(Below) You can have up to four players on Ultimate Golf, each of whom is detailed on his or her own character sheet. This highlights the player's strengths and weaknesses, as well as the obvious things, such as his name!



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GREG NORMAN'S ULTIMATE GOLF

Greg Norman has played in more golf tournaments than you and I have had hot dinners, so it was more than likely that yet another golf simulation should be based around the pro himself. Gremlin boast that their effort is by far the most accurate of all previous golf sims, allowing the player to either compete in a full-blown tournament with all of the thrills and spills of real-life play, or practise using the caddy to select the appropriate club.

To begin with, you select your player's name and skills. Beginners are better off sticking to a standard player, but once you are skilled enough to attempt your very own character, I don't see why you shouldn't. There are four factors that affect the state of play. These are: the wind; the weather; ball effects and the caddy. The wind affects the ball's distance and direction, depending on the power and direction of the gusts. The weather determines how far the ball travels because the grass may be wet or dry. If you switch off the ball effects, you'll no longer be able to spin the ball around obstacles such as trees. Lastly, the caddy selects the correct club

STEVE

My first impressions of *Shark Attack* was that all the options would make the game unnecessarily complex, but such worries were soon proved unfounded. Thanks to the many options, the game is suited for hard core fans of the sport and newcomers alike, and the game's gentle learning curve means that the game will open up new features to you, making its lasting appeal very high indeed. That's not to say that the game is without its faults, as the caddy can take ages to choose a club, and waiting for the ball to roll back down a slope takes a lifetime, but, overall, *Shark Attack* is worth a look.

ALEX

Greg Norman's *Ultimate Golf - Shark Attack* is one of the best golf sims available on the market, not only does it offer the experienced player some tricky courses to compete on, it can be adapted for the beginner. The number of options may seem daunting, but you'll soon learn that there is nothing to be worried about. *Ultimate Golf* plays as well as it looks, which is not something that many sports sims can boast. If you're looking for a decent golf simulation try this one.



■ Out of the fourteen clubs you brought with you onto the course, you must select the best one for your current shot. Alternatively, you can get your caddy to choose your club for you, but this can sometimes take a fair while.

SOUND

Apart from the brief loading tune, the sound is best described as sparse, and what is there is nothing special - just the noise of the club swinging or the ball splashing into a nearby pond.

52%

GRAPHICS

The vector graphics work well and emit a genuine feeling of realism. The courses are colourful, as is Greg himself. Greg is a large sprite that is fairly well animated as he smashes the ball into the distance!

73%

for each shot, as well as working out the 'hook' and 'slice' on the ball.

Once you have selected your preferences, it is time to stroll out onto the course. There are two courses in total, each with eighteen holes. There is also the option to install course disks when they become available. You will be asked which clubs you wish to take with you, having the choice of fourteen out of seventeen. The 'Info' menu will then drop down, which informs you of the various distances and weather conditions that will affect your shot. If playing in practice mode, it also allows you to relay a shot that you just took, or move the ball if you really want to.

Each club has its maximum distance, and by finding out the distance between you and the flag, you can select the best club for your desired shot. Each hole can be viewed from overhead, allowing you to see obstacles that are otherwise hidden from ground level. The swing varies the amount of spin on the ball. You can choose to add more or less backspin, sidespin or change your swing arc if you so desire.

The courses are drawn using 3D vector graphics, each line portraying the slopes and obstacles that are included on the current hole. The cursor allows you to direct your shot, and by pressing the right-hand mouse

button, you can choose the power. Once this has been done, a small line will start swinging under the power bar. This determines the 'hook' and 'slice' on the ball - the closer the line is to the centre, the straighter the shot. Practice makes perfect they say, and you'll need a lot of practice before every shot goes exactly where you want it to.

DOUG

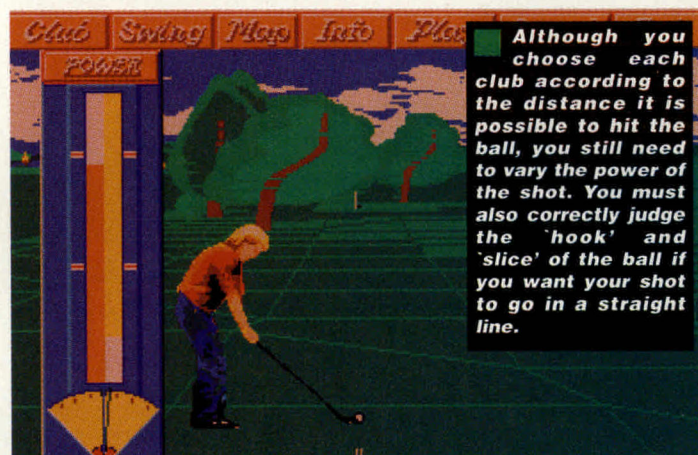
Greg Norman's golf is a very good simulation, with a heck of a lot of options to make the game both harder and easier for the player. The graphics are very good, and the way the ball interacts with the various obstructions dotted around the course is very good as well. However, even though this game comes up tops in all categories, I still think that the old game, *Leaderboard*, was just that bit more enjoyable, and even today stands high amongst the much newer golf sims. If you like sport sims, this game is certainly worth considering.



■ The flight of the ball depends on both the spin applied to the ball and the arc of the swing. Altering any of the three factors (backspin, sidespin and swing arc) will change the flight of the ball. If judged correctly, the results can be superb, but if you put too much spin on the ball, the result can be far from good!

OVERALL
RATING

73%

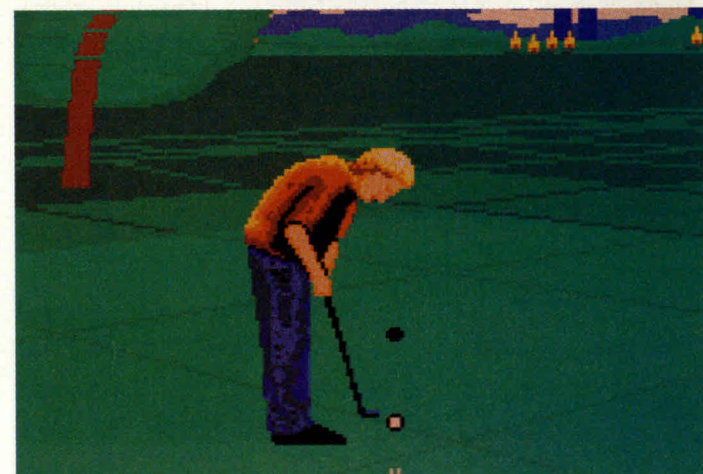


■ Although you choose each club according to the distance it is possible to hit the ball, you still need to vary the power of the shot. You must also correctly judge the 'hook' and 'slice' of the ball if you want your shot to go in a straight line.



■ (Left & below) Most holes are littered with obstacles ranging from large trees that block your view and water (which makes Greg's shoes a little damp) to bunkers which will undoubtedly trap many of your shots.

■ (Below) To finish off each course, you must putt the ball into the hole. You must judge correctly your strength of shot and also compensate for the slope around the hole.



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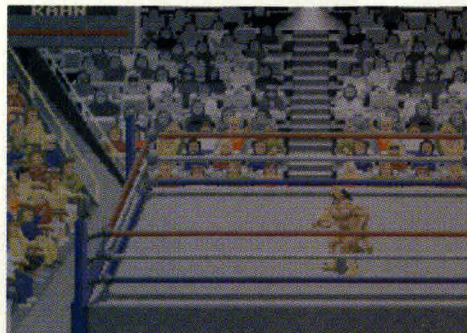
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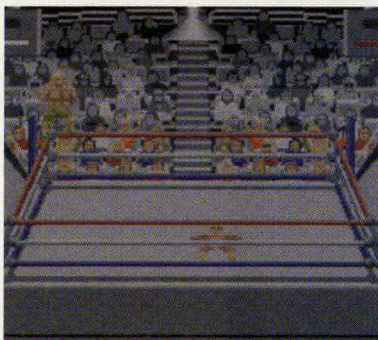
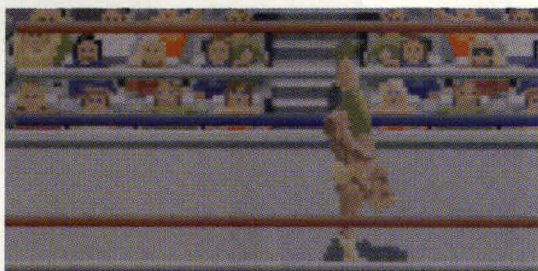
Each of the three wrestlers has his own strengths and weaknesses, and these are detailed in the manual, with a brief look at their past.



While the moves are very good at reducing your opponent to a wreck, you'll need something to finish him off. Special moves are the best thing for this job, for when the screen flashes, it means this is the perfect time to attack: pressing the button and moving the joystick to the right will make you take position and slay the poor soul.



(Left & below) Every move must begin with a head lock, and careful timing and smooth joystick control must be used to execute the hold. Once in the head lock, you can try one of the other moves, such as the painful Pile Driver; or even worse, throw him on the floor, climb up the ropes and jump down on the hapless wrestler!



As your player lies on the ground, trying to climb to his feet, you can only look on as your opponent climbs up on to the ropes and prepares to jump on you.

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INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING

Ivan 'The Bear' Trotsky grappled with 'The Bruiser', the current champion and, for the moment, was winning on points. The Bruiser shrugged off the Bear as he came charging towards him. As the Bear ran past, Bruiser stuck out his foot, making the Bear fall flat on his face. The Bruiser, seeing a perfect opportunity, climbed atop the ropes and leaped off, landing knees first in the Bear's chest. To finish off this splendid manoeuvre, he lifted his shattered opponent above his head and drove him head-first onto the canvas. The Bear

collapsed to the ground in a heap, and the Bruiser remained undefeated!

International Championship Wrestling challenges you to battle your way through numerous opponents including the Bear, your ultimate ambition being to beat the Bruiser in a fight to the end. Over fifteen moves are available for each character, plus a 'Death Move' for those special occasions. Three characters can be chosen from as your alter-ego: either Ivan Trotsky, Lance DoGood or Kai-Leung Kahn. Before the fight begins, you must select the skill

of your opponent, effectively setting the difficulty.

I.C.W. requires skilful joystick movements to time your moves correctly, and any hesitation whatsoever will probably result in your move becoming a flop! If you are skilled enough to battle through the other opponents, you'll have the chance to have a crack at the title. The 'Bruiser' is a big, mean wrestler and only the best can even get him in a head lock, and more often than not, you'll end up being tied in knots before being flung out of the ring!

GRAPHICS

Although the sprites and backdrops are drawn fairly well, the animation is not as good as you would hope. The crowd is a bit dull, but the action in and around the canvas is colourful.

43%

SOUND

Irritating title tune, probably the most irritating title tune you'll ever hear! In-game effects are limited, and are sadly not all they could have been.

43%

ALEX

International Championship Wrestling is virtually an exact reproduction of the aging title, Rock'n'Wrestle, with the same moves available to the player. That aside, it will take a while to conquer the control system, but once you are successful, you won't forget how to play your favourite throws. On the whole, I.C.W. didn't hold my interest long enough to justify the price tag.

STEVE

Unfortunately, Epyx's Championship Wrestling never made it to the Amiga, so until it does Amiga-owning grapple fans will have to make do with this sub-standard effort. Graphically, the game is very similar to Rock'n'Wrestle, and the gameplay follows this uninspired lead. Control over your wrestler is both confusing and irritating, and I found it annoying when my wrestler wouldn't do what I wanted him to - I mean, what's the point of having loads of moves if you can't use them? A poor release, that is best ignored.

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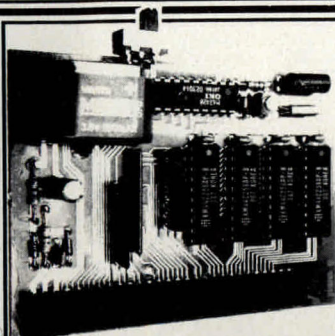
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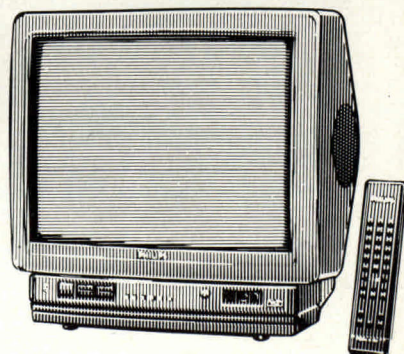
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FROM START TO FINISH: *THE DIARY OF A GAME*

Some ten months after Andrew Braybrook and the Graftgold team started work on Amiga Paradroid '90, the game is now finally nearing completion. Most of the decks are in, as are the rogue droids, and all that remains is to tie up the loose ends along with a few other problems. So, in this the last part of Andrew's Diary of a Game, read on as he gradually starts to reach the light at the end of the very long tunnel.

Tuesday 6th March.

I have just completed the robot enquiry system and input all the text about the robots. All the texts are drawn from a dictionary of about 200 words so some of the sentences are a little bit odd, having to re-use certain words rather than put in new ones. The dictionary in the game is currently limited to 256 words overall, a number which I thought would be plenty when I first wrote the text printer. I've started populating the 3rd ship with robots and other sundry items like crates and cups of coffee. This involves looking through each deck layout in turn, deciding where the robots should start, and where they can all move.

Wednesday 7th March.

One of the new large decks that I've just done has seven lifts on it, one more than anticipated in the system. A quick fiddle of the way the lifts work alleviates this so that lifts not near the screen get removed from the system and re-allocated when they are nearby. I thought it was already doing that anyway, it is with most other objects. Still, you live and learn. I've also completed the side view of the third ship - huge, it is, with over 130 resident robots.

Thursday 8th March.

The third ship was getting rather large: it takes nearly three hours of computer time to compress the

decks, to around 20% of their original size. In order to save a bit of memory, I removed a small deck from the layouts, which ultimately saved about 2K.

Meantime, Michael has been drawing full-screen pictures of some more robots. These are also compressed, by one of Dominic's wee routines this time. After bolting the compressed pictures together, the game loads them all in at once and caches them in slow memory. Each one is then decompressed as required onto the screen. This all worked nearly magnificently except that the black bits on the picture came out bright green. Two errors caused that: I set up the wrong palette and Michael didn't remap the black colour. One all, replay next Wednesday evening, seven-thirty kick off.

Made up the first ever 512K master for testing to see how much memory is actually spare, and to see if it still works. Took it home to test.

Friday 9th March.

A black day indeed. There I was, thinking all was going really well; played a whole ship all the way through, got the end of ship bonuses, it started to load in the second ship... and ground to a halt. I then realised that the load ship screen was using some allocated object blocks and had thus fragmented my dynamic memory. I start off with a vast field of memory and begin to carve it up, always taking the big chunks



Another of the many on-board rebellious droids, shown here as you prepare to enter the transfer game. I wonder why he needs the... er, well developed accomplice?

out first. Trouble was I took a couple of little chunks out, then gave the big lump back and asked for a bigger lump. Although I had enough free memory available, it wasn't all in one place. Result: system panic error. AmigaDos has the same sort of hassle. Quite often DPaint II complains on a 512K Amiga for similar reasons, as would any software using this design philosophy. It means that you can run more software at once if they all share the resources, but if they squeeze too hard, something will break.

Monday 12th March.

Further testing of the 512K version has revealed a major error in the game. It spontaneously combusts sometimes when I enter a lift. The whole game just stops. This I find odd, as I haven't played with the lift routine for some time, and nine times out of ten if a bug appears, it is to be found in the most recently altered code.

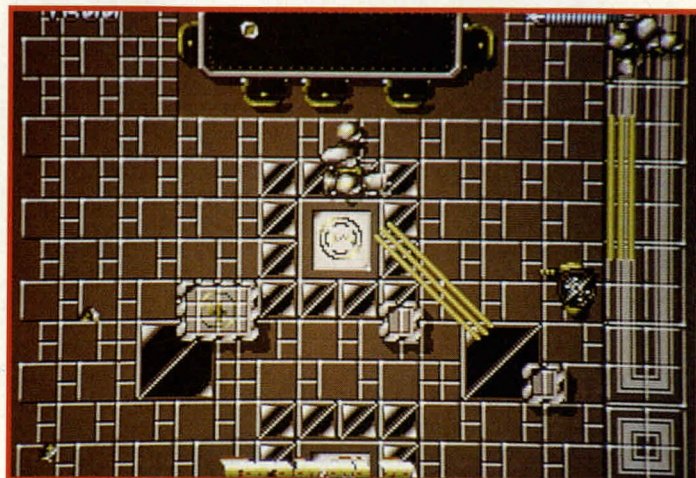
I've decided to ditch the 'deck cleared' message. It uses the font plotter and slows the game down as it appears and is totally superfluous now that the deck lights darken when the last robot is destroyed. I'll keep the 'ship cleared' message, it doesn't happen as often so it doesn't matter if things slow down a little then.

Tuesday 13th March.

Still looking for the bug. It's a really good one: the interrupts all get stitched so the machine is totally dead. Just to continue showing progress I'm continuing to populate another ship, and worrying a lot. It doesn't normally take this long to sort out a bug. I rarely lose a night's sleep these days by having an unsolved bug to think about.

Wednesday 14th March.

Jason was playtesting the game when it decided to leave the



Patrolling one of the detailed competed decks, the wandering Influence Device is attacked by a tri-laser-wielding droid - you have two choices: destroy him with your weaponry or merge with him for a bout of transference.

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loading ship music running during the game. Since I go to great lengths to switch this off I was quite surprised. Yet another problem to think about.

The main breakthrough with 'The Bug' came just before lunch time. I was tracing the game through and it went into the sound reset routine, which basically tells the sound manager to be quiet and then waits for its interrupt server to do so. This never happened. Of course, looking through the sound manager code it was obvious that it could not fail to complete its task.

Following rule 15 paragraph B of the bug-fixers guide: "If the code can't fail, it ain't executing it at all" it transpired that not only had the sound manager been shut down, but all interrupts had stopped. Now, I didn't get where I am today by shutting down the interrupts on the 68000, especially as I run my code in user mode most of the time so it's tricky anyway, then it can't be my fault.

This bug only occurs on a 512K machine, not on a 1 Megabyte beast so it's either a corruption or maybe a memory allocation fault. On a whim I decided to trace the memory allocator, especially its strategy when unable to pass the required memory back, i.e. failure on a 512K machine. Suddenly it dawned on me, the memory allocator switches off interrupts while it is playing with doubly-linked lists, and doesn't restart them when it fails. That's one to Dominic and his Kernel.

Spent the rest of the week on cloud having fixed a bug in the Kernel and generally pottering about with ship layouts.

Monday 19th - Wednesday 21st March.

Still quietly decorating and populating ships. The stages in the life of a new freighter are as follows:

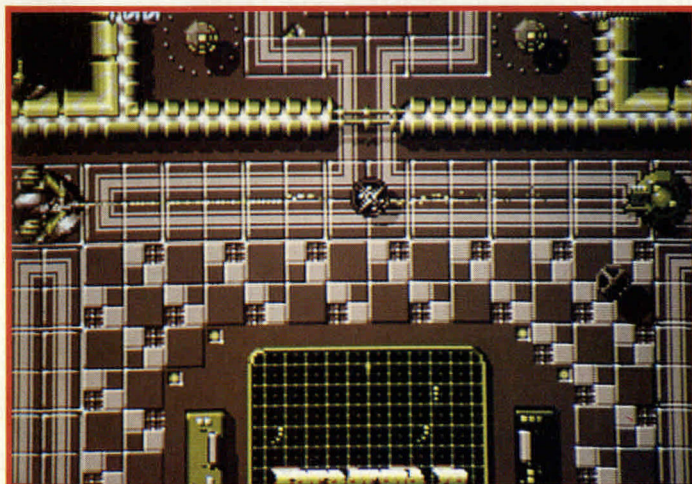
- 1) design freighter on paper, showing walls, lifts and general ideas for decks.
- 2) give design to John Lilley to set up on the mapper program.
- 3) give shell of the ship to Michael to put floor designs and detailed console layouts on ship, the really creative bit.
- 4) assign doors, lifts, energisers, consoles etc. to map.
- 5) put in side view of decks and shafts.
- 6) test integrity of lift shafts and positioning of doors etc.
- 7) draw patrol routes, with co-ordinates on original paper map.
- 8) input patrol routes and assign robots to patrol points.
- 9) assign sundry objects, e.g. crates and alert blocks to decks.
- 10) thoroughly test layouts.

This whole process takes the best part of two man weeks altogether.

I decided to add a feature I'd been thinking about for some time, to make some robot's heads fly off when destroyed. On a random chance, the head may spin off, casting a shadow on the ground, and fall to the ground before exploding separately. Quite gruesome. All it needs now is a squirt of 20/50 multigrade and...

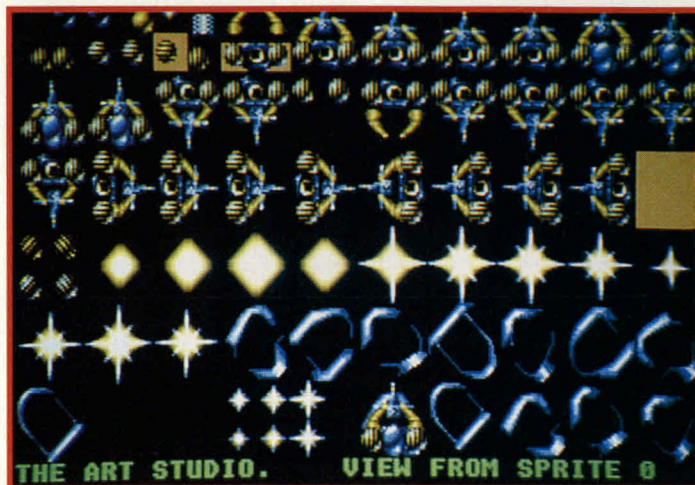
Thursday 22nd - Friday 23rd March.

Found a long-lost bug in the tank turret AMP (Alien Manoeuvre Program, remember them?) that meant that when fired upon it fired three shots back and then stopped. I'd got so used to it doing this that I had forgotten to look for that one. As soon as I fixed it and the tanks fired back continuously the lunch-time testing team of Gary and Jason have complained non-stop for its re-installment. Now I would never put a bug back into a program, but...they're getting violent, so I'll re-program the tanks to fire three shots back and then stop. OK lads, put the monkey wrench



Most of the decks are now complete, and all that remains is to pick out the few troublesome bugs that ruin the game's continuity and polish.

A humble ST, complete with Rainbird's trusty OCP Art Studio is used to develop the sprites, but they are then ported over to the Amiga where extra colours from the machine's better palette are used.



away, now.

I have a version of the pirate/raiders that are resident, for locking away in the brig and so forth. On meeting them in enclosed corridors I was surprised to be quite successful against them. Then I discovered why. They were not defined up as an enemy, so their bullets did not inherit that enmity, and they passed right through me - not a scratch. Better fix that one. I'm not going to tell Gary and Jason, though.

Monday 26th March.

Every now and then a couple of wandering robots will seemingly grab hold of each other and dance, ad infinitum. The only way to stop them is to fire at them. I never intended that to happen at all. They have a random waiting period and are then supposed to both turn round and walk away. Fortunately, my inter-robot collision routine passes back some important information, like what direction a robot was hit from. By looking at that, a robot can determine whether it is already moving away from the collision and thus do nothing. Only the robot or robots that caused the collision will turn round. Since doing that, not one pair of robots has been seen doing the waltz at all.

Thursday 29th March - Friday 30th March.

Having got all the plot routines working and clearly defined, that is, I am unlikely to want to change them, I must now persuade the blitter to do the work instead of the 68000. I hate working out minterms, both the methods in the hardware reference manual strike me as being artificial. What I really want to know is: how does the blitter deal with minterms?

Anyway, the shadow plot routine was a doddle, so much so

that the first minterm plotted everything back to front, so I had black squares running about with robot-shaped holes cut through them, bleah!

The particle plotter is best done with straight code, you still need to plot about five or six raster lines per blit to make up the overhead of setting up the blitter in the first place. After that it is much faster. I have one plot routine that I haven't used yet, so it's about time to lose that one. Slash, tear, rip.

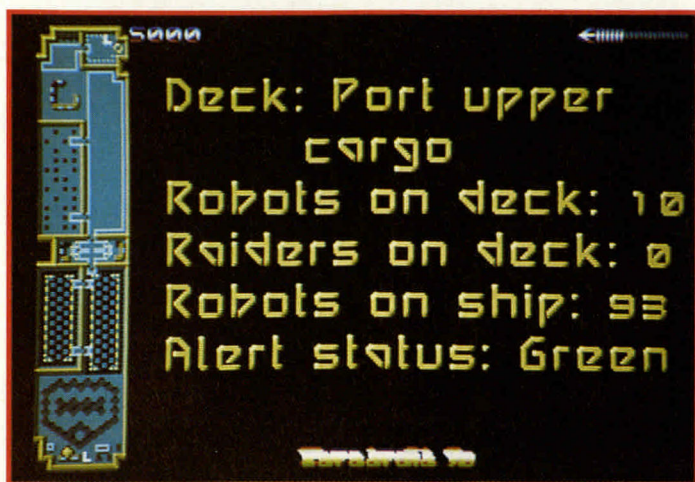
Monday 2nd April.

Spent the day at the European Trade Fair. Ocean kindly picked up our award for Rainbow Islands being voted the Best Conversion. I'm sure they'll send it along to us soon. Many thanks to all who voted for it.

Thursday 5th - Friday 6th April.

In order to test Paradroid on a stand-alone basis, free of the parallel link from the ST where all the source code is kept and where remote debugging is done from, it is necessary to put the game and all loaded data files onto a bootable Amiga disk. This is not quite as simple as it might seem as both of our Amigas are deficient in some way. Let me elaborate: our 1 Meg Amiga is required for debugging as it keeps extra symbols in memory for the debugger, the game is too big for me to develop on a half Meg machine. However, the RS232 download software won't work with the 1 Meg Amiga, so to make up a disk I have to switch to the other Amiga.

The half Meg Amiga won't boot from any disk with the parallel cable connected, so I have to unplug the lead, boot up, download the disk-maker software, and finally unplug the



Any relevant info on the deck you are about to enter is called up between stages, and details the classes of robots you are likely to encounter.

lead again to persuade the RS232 to work. Marvellous, this technology stuff.

Monday 9th April.

Well, Paradroid '90 is now essentially booting itself off the disk and running in some sort of fashion. Unfortunately, one of the ship data files has mysteriously been cut short so one of the ships won't work; the screen just appears to be a jumbled-up mess. All of the screen drivers that use the blitter are fine, now that I've logically inverted the mask on all of the graphics. The blitter is a strange beast, for the first and last word masks to work correctly, the data mask has to be the opposite way round from the way the 68000 would like it.

Tuesday 10th April.

Remade the boot disk and this time all the files are complete. Must have been cosmic interference from the Graftgold geo-stationary satellite, which for convenience is placed on the end of a big stick attached to the roof. I've been pondering over what to do with the hardware sprites for some time. There aren't really enough of them to handle the multitude of moving objects in the game, most of which go under and over bits of background scenery anyway. I have plumped for pressing them into action as an overlaid score and energy bar. Using them in three-colour mode in conjunction with a few copper instructions to change the colours every line should be enough to get the desired effect. How difficult can it be?

Wednesday 11th April.

Well, I can't find the sprites. I've got all eight of them positioned on the screen, not necessarily quite where the hardware reference manual would have me put them,

but they're supposed to be on the visible screen; sprite DMA is switched on and the DMA pointers are reset. Where are they?

I hate looking for things in Dominic's Kernel. He said I'd enjoy trying to get sprites working. Now I've found out why. He's switching off the sprite DMA every frame. No wonder I can't see them. Gary nobbled the Kernel so now my sprites will appear. But no, they're still not there.

Thursday 12th April.

Back on with the miners' helmets and we're off into the dark dank depths of the Kernel once more. What's this? A weeny little copper fragment that switches the sprites into hide-behind-the-playfields mode. I'm pretty suspicious of the palette handling too, I think it's changing the sprites to all black

every frame, I just can't prove it. More sticking-plaster and the Kernel is back on its knees again, and yes, my sprites are here at last.

Steve, the boss, has been playing the game for the first time in ages and had a small gripe regarding being able to spot the Influence Device quickly when it beams in. Some sort of attention-drawing display is required. I knocked up some AMPs to cause a whole heap of particles to zoom in towards the player during the beam-in sequence. It looked quite pretty but I calculated that it was running at least three hundred particles to do it, more than a half Meg machine would allow, and the game grinds to a halt while it's doing it. I'll have to calm it down a bit.

Tuesday 17th April.

Visit to Hewson to show them the latest version of the game and tell them how wonderful it all is. Meantime, Michael has been beaver away on the giant pictures of the droids. More than half of them are done now, all the difficult ones, so he says, just the seven-stone weakling ones to go.

Wednesday 18th April.

Having got the game nearly finished, I can now work out what sound effects I want. I know what sort of overall effect I am going for, and I have to scour the game looking for events that will produce a sound. I am directing most in-game sound effects to the left or right-hand speaker, depending on where on screen the effect is coming from, which

takes two channels. One of the remaining channels is for background effects, like the deck burbling noises and the alert klaxon, and the other channel is for miscellaneous other effects of importance. Counting up, over sixty effects are required, plus thirty-two instruments for the music, which should keep Jason busy for a while.

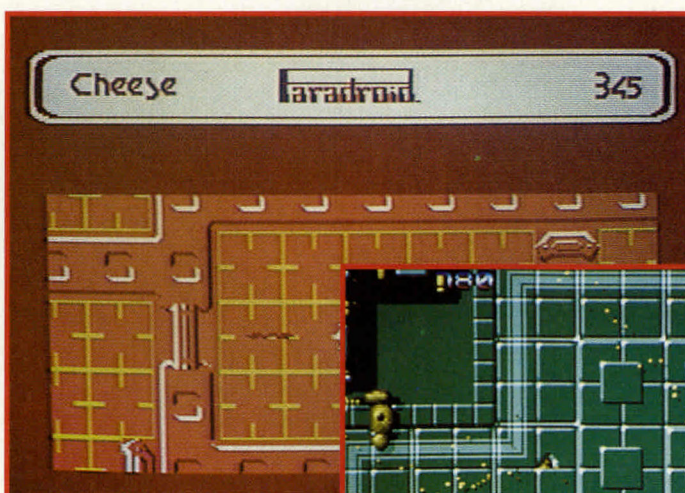
An addendum to the saga of the Amigas not talking to the parallel and serial ports properly is that neither sound sampler that we have will work with either of our Amigas. I'm beginning to suspect that we've broken something in there.

Thursday 19th April.

Jason and Gary each took a sampler home to try on their own Amigas. Both of them worked. Jason has therefore decided to obtain the required samples at home. One that always causes trouble is the white noise used for explosions. In Rainbow Islands we actually sampled a C64 doing white noise! Our friends at Rainbow Arts, Julian and Boris, tell us that they sampled an atomic bomb going off, but we haven't got one of those.

We have an algorithmic sound effects generator, which means that we don't have to just sample everything raw, we can make effects from simple samples just like the C64s SID chip uses simple waveforms. This gives us great flexibility with the sounds and doesn't burn up lots of valuable chip memory with huge samples. Of course we can just play a raw sample if required and we will be doing so for the main Paradroid 90 theme.

Jason wants me to switch the low pass filter off, so that the sound effects are clearer. I didn't believe him that to switch that off you also switch off the power light on the Amiga. What berk thought of wiring those together? Why isn't the power light actually monitoring the power coming into the Amiga?



Just for reference purposes, on the left is a screenshot from Andrew's 64 version of Paradroid, notice how different the new, improved, biologically-cleaner Paradroid '90 looks - it's amazing the difference a couple of years make in terms of game design. isn't it?



Isn't it rather dangerous that you actually have no real indication that power is gushing through the machine? Come the glorious day, brothers, I know one hardware designer who'll be first up against the wall.

Friday 20th April.

A niggling thought about widening the door overlay has finally got to me. There are two droids which cause minor embarrassment to my system and I when they rotate in a doorway. Their arms or other protuberances (ooo-er) overlap the door edges and show through. By widening the door lintel overlay I can cover their, and my, embarrassment.

Jason has almost finished the sound effects, and so I can switch out the dummy sound routine and run the new one, still with the Rainbow Islands tunes in for the moment. Now that's what I call odd.

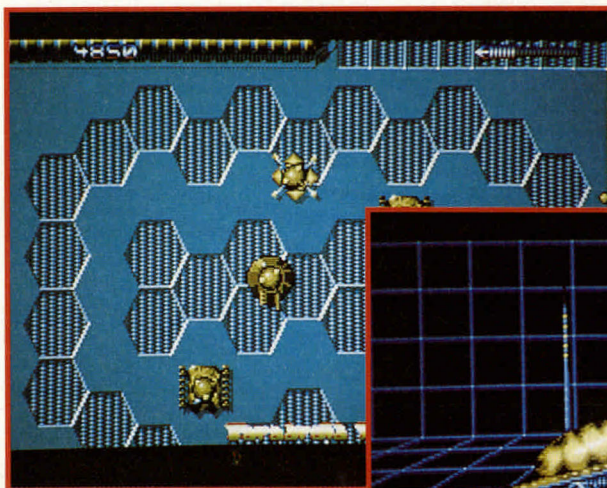
Monday 23rd April.

We can prioritise each sound effect so that the important ones get heard. It's always a problem trying to balance the sound, what with over sixty effects fighting over four channels, not all at the same time, fortunately, but you get the idea. All the weapons firing are fairly low, and the explosion effects are higher so they interrupt the former. More important effects are normally short so they don't just hog the channel.

The big meanie cyborg has its own drone sound at four different volumes so that as it approaches the player it gets louder. It's also stereo panned so you can hear what side of the deck it's on.

Tuesday 24th April.

David spotted a minor discrepancy in the system that no-one else had. He wanted to pummel a sentinel on emerging



from a lift so he stood facing in the required direction, operated the lift, and was most disgruntled to discover that his facing direction had been randomised. I hadn't bothered to preserve it as I didn't think it would matter. It has taken eight months to spot it so I nearly got away with it. Still, it's in now. Advanced players can now use this facility, and in fact I may position droids so that on later ships it is necessary to do so.

Wednesday 25th April.

Put on the rubber gloves again and dived into the Kernel to fix its sample switching. Now that we have longer samples for the instruments such as drums, we had noticed that the samples were not always switching between instruments and some sound effects. The audio DMA must be switched off for a short, fairly undefined, time to shut it down properly. The hardware reference guide was rather vague about how long exactly, I don't think it really knows. It actually depends on the playback rate, so I've shut the channel down for one call to the sound manager, or one hundredth of a second. Using a software delay loop could be disastrous if someone has a

This is a 729 Armoured Tank - one of the deadliest around. Ask yourself this: do you feel lucky, punk? One of the more powerful rogue droids shown both in detail and in action - well worth beating in the transfer game, if only for the weaponry.



68030 turbo-nutter CPU.

Thursday 26th April.

Jason's still complaining about the sound routine. He'd quite like a total rewrite but he'll settle for his bass drum being a bit louder. Our software enveloping is a little slow to start so the sample is already fading out before the envelope has even got to full attack. Being a full bass drum sample it's entitled to supply its own attack envelope in the sample so the player now wallops the volume up to full from the word go, rather like Jason and Michael's portable CD players.

Friday 27th April.

Jason has had the tunes on SoundTracker for some time, so it didn't take him long to convert them to our format and try them out. So far he has done one three-voice tune for the high score entry, leaving one for the letter entered sound effect, and four four-voice tunes for intermediary stages in the game. Due to a chronic shortage of chip memory I have decided to load in the samples for Jason's super-atmospheric tune separately. On a boring old 512K machine this would mean switching out the currently loaded ship, a real pain every time you return to the titles sequence, so we have an alternate tune for that. For those people with 1 Meg or more, the samples will be loaded once off and kept. Also, all the ships can be in memory at once without reloading. Such are the perks available to those people with upgraded machines.

I've started writing out the game instructions, always difficult when you already know the game

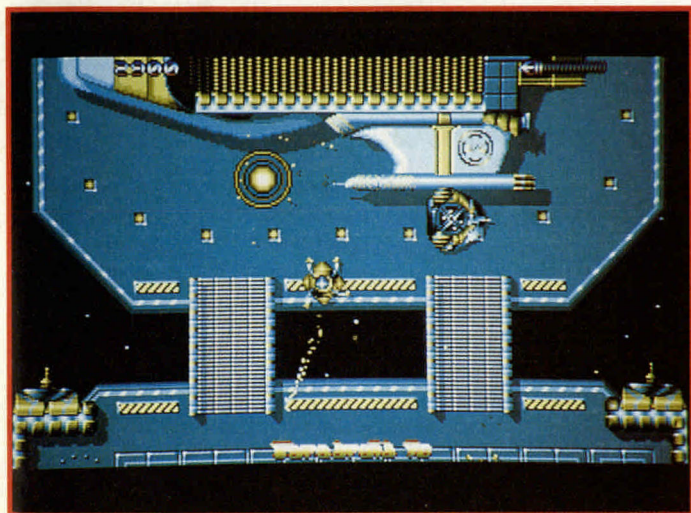
inside out, as it's difficult to gauge what people need to know just to get started. I also want to convey the complexity of what is going on in the game, not because you need to know it, but because if you do know it then it makes the game more understandable. Once in possession of all the facts you can plan winning strategies against the game.

Monday 30th April.

Officially the last day. Michael has delivered the last of the large robot pictures, and Jason is happy with the music. In fact, I have one ship left to populate with robots, which is about two days work if it all goes smoothly. The game is working well, there is just about enough free memory in the machine to cope, despite a last minute scare that the disk system needs about 24K before it'll consider doing anything useful.

The instructions are just about finished and we'll be producing some support material in the form of ship layouts and pictures, and I still have to produce a shop demo version, which may also be suitable for a demo cover disk. I hope that someone somewhere will enjoy the game. I've tried to put the emphasis on gameplay in the true tradition of great games but still do graphic and sonic justice to the Amiga.

Thanks very much to Andrew Braybrook and all the guys at Graftgold and Hewson for their help in making this diary. Look out for a review of the game, hopefully, next month.



The robots mill about outside Andrew's set piece - the impressive retro-firing shuttle.

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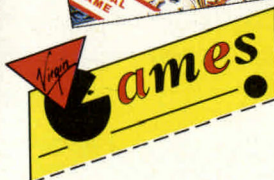
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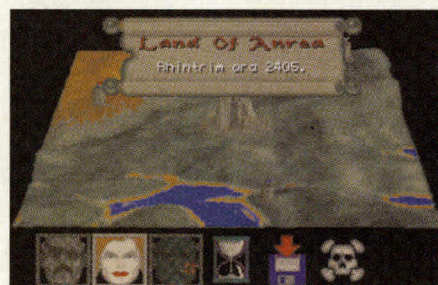
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